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KAZAKHSTAN
Steppe
MONGOLIA
Dzungaria
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Kyzyl Kum Desert
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Ras al Khaimah
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Regional Economic Cooperation
New Silk Route Initiative and Afghanistan

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Abstract
With a population of more than 1.6 billion, South Asia's economies are growing rapidly, and its demand for inexpensive, efficient, and reliable energy is growing in turn. At the same time, Central Asia is a repository of vast energy resources, oil, gas, and hydropower. Directing some of these resources southward from Central to South Asia, through Afghanistan, would be a win-win for the region's energy suppliers and energy consumers alike. The country has more the history of conflict than construction and development, and the post-9/11 US-Taliban conflict was no exception to it. It turned to be devastative from the human security and infrastructural development perspectives. As force and reconciliation having failed to resolve the conflict, the US perceived its end through Afghanistan's regional and economic integration with South and Central Asia, and thus mooted the idea of the New Silk Route Initiative (NSRI) for the purpose. The Asian Regionalism is the most notable phenomenon that has captured the attention in the post cold war era. With multiple transitions underway in Afghanistan, the paper signifies the significance of United States and its allies who tried the NSRI to bolster peace, stability in the region and support a transition for trade and transportation over Afghanistan, Central Asia, Pakistan, and India and beyond.
In this context the study is an attempt to analyses regional economic cooperation in the South and Central Asian region in terms of logic, institutions, actors, and expectations. The study will also access the relationship NSRI and US interests in the region? Further the study will through light on how Globalisation has transformed the Eurasian context into regionalism?

Keywords
Afghanistan, Central Asia, Economic Cooperation, Eurasia, New Silk Route Initiative, South Asia, Regionalism.

Introduction

Several initiatives were taken to translate the aforesaid theoretical perspectives of regional economic cooperation into practice for South and Central Asia including Afghanistan. In essence, these were meant to transform Afghanistan into a "hub" or "roundabout" in Eurasia and

strengthen the North-South axis connecting South Asia with the rest of Eurasia.[1] One of the initiatives is the "New Silk Road Initiative" (NSRI) unfolded by the United States on the sidelines of UN General Council meeting in 2011. It was signed by 28 countries except China and Iran, and was supported by the Asian Development Bank in financial terms and the "Northern Distribution Network" (NDN), which transferred non-lethal NATO supplies to Afghanistan, in security terms.[2]

In fact, its idea was long back discussed in the annual meeting of the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECCA) held in Afghanistan in 2005[3] at the initiative of United Kingdom, the then G-8 chair.[4] It was attended by the delegates from 11 countries, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE and G-8, World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The meeting underscored the need of promoting specific forms of regional economic cooperation in the areas of energy, trade, investment and transportation. Special focus was laid on the hydropower generation, water sharing, energy transportation, narcotic trade control and favourable business climate in the region.[5]

The second RECCA was hosted by India in Delhi in November 2006 to further the resolutions adopted at the Kabul conference.[6] Representatives of countries from Canada, Finland, (EU Presidency), France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE, UK, US and Uzbekistan and the organizations like Asian Development Bank (ADB), Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), European Commission (EC), European Council (EC), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations (UN) and World Bank participated in the event. It resolved to promote general trade, transportation, investment, energy exchange, per se; through the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline etc.[7] Special focus was laid on the renewal of energy and agriculture. Follow up meetings with Afghanistan's Investment Support Agency (AISA) resolved as under: the Creation of a centre for Regional Cooperation at Kabul; development of Public-Private Partnership as key aspect of regional development; integration of the existing regional groupings into a larger whole; Afghanistan's

shift from a regional specific approach to capacity development; and the identification of the next theme of the RECCA conference on mining, water, heath, labour, human resource development and trade and transit. The Delhi Declaration also resolved that:[8]

- Regional Countries will develop confidence building measures to remove obstacles to overland and inter-state trade and transit;
- Win-win projects, notably in the fields of energy, transport, trade, agriculture and mining, shall be collective organized by the participant countries;
- Information shall be shared on key issues to avoid duplication of efforts;
- ADB will undertake a study on regional integration strategies and will share key findings at the next conference;
- Regional countries will work towards aviation liberalization for greater regional connectivity;
- Work on TAPI gas pipeline will be speeded up to realize a technically and commercially viable project;
- Regional linkages shall be established for human resource training and development and institutional growth.

The third RECCA conference scheduled in Pakistan in 2007[9] was actually held in Islamabad in May 2009. Following resolutions were adopted for Eurasian economic integration with Afghanistan as its roundabout: signing of trade and transit agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan before the end of 2009; conducting of a pre-feasibility study of railways by the European Commission for and across Afghanistan; establishment of a Customs Academy in Kabul; conducting feasibility studies for the development of economic zones over Afghanistan borders; and establishing an Afghan Centre by the European Commission within the Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The fourth RECCA was held in Istanbul 2010, November 2-3. RECCA participants recommended to improve the a) Infrastructure (Regional Roads, Railways, Extractive Mine Industry, Public-private partnerships and investment to enable commercially viable), b) Trade, Transit and border management (Regional Transit and Trade Agreements, Trade Facilitation, Customs and Transport Infrastructure Harmonization and Upgrade, Enhancement of Border Cooperation), c) Education and vocational training, d) Agriculture, f) Small and medium enterprises and others.[10]

The Fifth RECCA conference held in Dushanbe Tajikistan[11] terminated with resolutions about five crucial areas of cooperation among the participant countries: infrastructural development (transport and energy); human resource development (including vocational training and labour market facilitation); investment and trade (including transit and border management); regional disaster management and regional fibre optic connectivity besides establishment of regional institutions for vocational training (in Tajikistan) and disaster management (in Kazakhstan).[12] These resolutions included the one that sort to take stock of the situation after every conference.

The 6th Regional Economic Cooperation on Afghanistan (RECCA) was held in Kabul with delegates from 30 countries and almost 40 organizations.[13] It was devoted to a discussion on and around Afghanistan's economic projects, transit and trade cooperation, customs, structures, systems, Afghan workers in Gulf countries etc. On the occasion, Afghan government acknowledged the RECCA's role in strengthening regional economic cooperation; attracting foreign investment to the country; exploring country's alternate transit routes to South Asia; building her image in the world at large and establishing a permanent monitoring office for regional economic cooperation.[14] Qurban Haqjo, the Afghanistan Investment Security Agency (AISA) chief said on the occasion that "along with the government, it is quite significant to have the role of the private sector contributing in different economic projects on a regional level; this could lead to the enhancement of investment in various countries."[15] Inclusive economic strategies are supposed to ensure sustainable growth in Afghanistan and the region," said Afghan Minister of Economy, Abduk Sattar Murad[16] The 6th RECCA conference terminated with the resolution emphasizing on the establishment of five rail corridors between Afghanistan and its five regional countries; launch of gas pipeline projects between Central Asian and South Asia over Afghanistan; implementation of the TAPI project[17]; boost to the private sector investment in Afghanistan in future and, above all, the relocation or revival of the ancient Silk Road.

Old Silk Route and its Revival: Background

Further to the aforesaid RECCA resolutions, the US took the initiative of a New Silk Route vision to revive Ancient Silk Route, and re-establish the hassle-free movement of goods and people across Afghanistan as its main hub. To recall, South and Central Asian region was characteristic

of a transcontinental highway, antedating 3rd - 2nd century BC and connecting China with Rome across the great civilizations of India, Central Asia, Middle East and Europe.[18] The highway named as the Grand Silk Route by a German geographer in the 19th century,[19] did not signify a single route but rather a cluster of routes criss-crossing the region in different directions and one of them crossed over Afghanistan and reached out to Iran and Central Asia on the one hand and Pakistan, India and South Asia on the other.[20]

The said highway was famous for both inter and intra-state trade in farm and craft products besides horses, camels and other cattle products. No doubt, silk was the principle commodity, but other regional varieties formed a part of its variegated trade structure, besides the exchange of men, material, ideas and ideologies, the said highway was known for cross-cultural and inter-faith dialogue between and among the people of the South and Central Asian region, to which Afghanistan was the key constituent.[21]

However, the said highway fractured and became non functional with the discovery of the Sea Route and the genesis of the nation states and their periodic conflict and wars for jingoistic nationalism and imperial and other designs.[22] Its spill over, *inter alia*, was geographical and historical disconnect between Afghanistan and South Asia owing to India-Pakistan conflict on Kashmir,[23] their intermittent wars and the emergence of a highly militarized borderline as a deterrent to Central and South Asia integration over Afghanistan.

While Afghanistan was hardly bearing the brunt of her disconnect from South Asia, it was overtaken by great power rivalry for territorial gains, material pursuits and regional influence. The Anglo-Afghan Wars of the 19th century and Soviet-Afghan War of 20th century offer the illustrious examples of the periodic sufferings of the Afghans. Of late, they were eclipsed by more than 15 years US-Taliban fighting over power and ideological supremacy. However, neither of the two irreconcilable actors had an absolute victory despite heavy human toll and infrastructural damage worth trillions of US Dollars.[24]

No doubt, amid the conflict, the US strived for dialogue with the insurgents, provided relief to the war-stricken Afghans and funds for country's mining and agricultural development to "wean away peasants from poppy cultivation" for [it] being the financial source of Taliban insurgency. However, all such measures went waste either due to the ongoing conflict or else the corruption battered ruling elite of President

Karzai.[25] The predicament was compounded by the absence of in-state and out-states' free border corridors for marketing of Afghan imports and exports. The rigid borders had emanated from the genesis of the nation states of India and Pakistan and their historical conflict on Kashmir.[26]

No wonder, for perpetual conflicts and wars, Afghanistan offers a poor economic profile, which is presently complicated by drowning export potential and donor support and soaring security expenditure. In addition, the landlocked country has rough and rugged terrain and only 12% area is arable in a total space of 250, 000 square kilometres. Her export potential is quite limited: US$ 119 million in 2005 and US$ 492 million or US$ 1612 million in 2010. Despite having rich energy deposits, the production of oil and gas is minimal which does not rhyme with the actual demand of the population. As a result, she imports bulk of energy from neighbouring Central Asian states. Her crunched economy is the natural concomitant of above predicament, which the President Karzai vainly tried to balance through short-cut means: increasing domestic taxes and curtailing public expenditure. Not surprising, therefore, to see the country trailing behind other South Asian countries in terms of health, education, infrastructure, security and other indicators of human resource development. The poverty and corruption are rampant and whole scenario explains the underlying reason of Afghan insurgency and country's overall poor profile.[27]

New Silk Route Initiative (NSRI)

Thus on the failure of its military mission and reconciliation process, the US attempted for conflict resolution through the medium of regionalization or regionalism or rather country's regional and economic integration with Central Asia and South Asia. For this purpose, it conceived the New Silk Route Initiative (NSRI). Estimated at ADB funded 20 billion US Dollars, the project was estimated to commence in 2014 and end by 2020. It was thought of with following considerations in mind: to neutralize the restive Afghans through economic integration with its neighbourhood; supplement Afghanistan's appalling economy with additional transit and taxes to be realized from intra-regional and trans-border trade with South and central Asia; empower Afghanistan to negotiate security and other expenses by herself than by the US; enable the US to sustain her influence in Afghanistan after her proposed withdrawal in 2014; empower new Afghan Government to channelize

the socio-economic and security gains of the past one decade and reduce her dependence on the foreign aid and assistance; boost her bilateral, trilateral and multilateral trade with neighbours; integrate her into a larger Eurasian whole for successful transition after 2014 and re-ensure free movements of goods, services, capital and people across South and Central Asian region.[28]

In precise terms, the NSRI seeks to cultivate benefits of economies of scale or other efficiencies for Afghanistan, which is a catalyst to restoring her physical connectivity with South Asia; increasing her local supply capacity and access to South Asian markets; and harmonizing her neighbourly trans-boundary issues related to the trade regulatory mechanisms, transport, transit and regional infrastructure, shared natural resources and worth trillion dollar natural wealth exploration, and thereby generate jobs, revenues, systems, and other structures in Afghanistan through regional and economic amalgamation with South and Central Asia. As a matter of fact, NSRI and its allied intra-state economic tie up offers ample opportunities of growth and development to the peoples of Afghanistan in particular, and India, Pakistan, Central Asia, etc. in general.[29]

Indeed, for landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asia,[30] regional integration is imperative for trade and economic growth; marketing of energy resources; diversification of energy pipelines; and their direct physical connection with a wider region.[31] Although the size of the markets in Afghanistan and Central Asia are very small when considered individually, pooling markets through regional economic integration can generate economies of scale and the potential for regional resource sharing. As smaller markets can be vulnerable to monopoly capture, market widening can increase competition and offer higher productivity gains.[32] Further, the NSRI can facilitate legitimizing the informal and unrecorded trade following poorly designed state policies, which tend to create the impression that informal economy is unproductive. Regional trade facilitation measures can, therefore, raise the level of formality and the volume of trade. Moreover, regional provision of public goods, energy, finance, telecommunications and transport can facilitate to address development challenges. But, all this is possible once connectivity improvements are made within an agreed regional trade facilitation strategy.

The significance of regional cooperation is adequately appreciated in the following official statement of the Afghanistan National

Development Strategy (ANDS): "the central goal of the Regional Cooperation is to contribute to regional stability and prosperity, and to enhance the conditions for Afghanistan to resume its central role as a land bridge between Central Asia and South Asia, the Middle East and the Far East, as the best way of benefiting from increased trade and export opportunities."[33] The ANDS anticipates that regional integration will yield significant strategic benefits for economic growth, border management, social well being and regional security. The following figure is quite representative:

Strategic Outcome of Regional Integration & Afghanistan's National Development Strategy

Source: Cf. "Afghanistan and Central Asia: Strengthening Trade and Economic Ties," *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*, Bangkok-Thailand, 2015, p.19.

Afghanistan and Central Asian trade has further potential to grow keeping in view the desire of the Central Asians to shift from trans-surface routes of Russia over to the ports in the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf,[34] for which are, however, essential much better and integrated infrastructures, formal institutions, harmonized regulatory frameworks like trade agreements and customs unions in Central and South Asian region.[35] Luckily, the Aga Khan Foundation has enormously invested on road and bridge building in the Greater Badakhshan region, whereas other international donors have invested on constructing rail connection between *Mazar-e Sharif* and the Uzbek border and roadways between Afghanistan and Central Asian states within larger Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) framework. In the mean time, several other investment projects are under way for the furtherance

of regional economic integration over Afghanistan. These include Special Program for the Economics of Central Asia (SPECA), Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), and South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAARC) etc. All these forums are actively engaged in fostering trade and transport throughout the Greater Central Asia region.[36] However, New Silk Route Initiative (NSRI) represents a vision and call to action rather than a well-articulated and organised strategy. It endorses the concept of Afghanistan's merger into the Eurasian economic hub.[37] It emphasizes on international partners to support the development of regional transport and energy corridors over Afghanistan. The Major projects allied to the NSRI are the TAPI pipeline and the CASA-1000 energy link.[38]

The NSRI is, therefore, a catalyst to the concept of regionalization. It is expected that it would provide much needed support to Afghanistan in case US made complete withdrawal from Afghanistan. Its main objective is that "if Afghanistan is firmly embedded in the economic life of the region, it will be better able to attract new investments, benefit from its resource potential, provide increasing economic opportunities and hope for its people."[39] Besides, it would propel economic boost to Afghanistan's neighbours, including Central Asian Republics. Central Asia possesses great energy resources and economic potential though, yet it remains one of the least integrated regions in the global economy for its landlockedness. The NSRI can a long way to modernize infrastructure and effective cross-border trade in the Eurasian region.[40]

Conclusion

The NSRI aims at transforming the minds of the belligerent from conflict to peace and development; unearthing worth $billion wealth of natural resources; networking Afghan cities; facilitating diasporas to the maximum possible; exploring opportunities for ordinary Afghan men and women to strike off poverty through education and employment; and shifting Afghanistan's priorities from security human resource development. Indeed, in the current environment of global fiscal constraint, the shift from massive military expenditure to focused investments in human capital and infrastructure is badly required for overall human welfare. However, there are existence of challenges and threats ahead of it. These are allied to the continued Taliban-Afghan conflict; unending Afghan political insecurity; growing infighting amongst the Islamist insurgents (Taliban and IS); mutual enmity among

Afghanistan and its neighbourly states; foreign forces interference through proxy war in Afghanistan; appalling Afghan economy; endemic corruption; arms and narcotic smuggling; miss-governance and absence of rule of law and justice etc. Their existence may prove to be deterrent to the NSRI. However, the initiators and most people around the Silk Route are optimistic about the success of the initiative as it is relevant to Afghanistan once peace returns to the country, depends on time and the policy perception of the regional and global players. Moreover, ultimate goal of the initiative is to reunite Asian powers for enduring peace, security and prosperity of the region at large.

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The Old Silk Road and the New Silk Road
An Analysis of the Changed Discourse

Lubina Sarwar

Abstract

The 'Silk Road' had predominantly been a series of trade routes that intertwined their way through Europe, Central Asia, Persia to China to facilitate exchanges of trade, commerce, culture and knowledge roughly between 130 BC and 1453 AD. Known for trades of silk and spices, it was a significant economic corridor for almost one-and-half millennium connecting major regions of the world. In 2013 Chinese President Xi Jinping resurrected the idea to re-open trade corridors between China and its neighbors in the west and notably Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and put-forth the idea of 'The New Silk Road'. In May 2017 China held first summit of 'Belt and Road Forum' (BARF) to unveil the idea of 'New Silk Road' before world. The New silk routes are different from the historic silk routes as the former served as a mode of connection for trade and cultural exchange with little political significance. Contrarily, the New Silk Road (also called Belt and Road Initiative-BRI) is an overt expression of China's power ambitions in the 21st century and is regarded as hedging strategy of China against the eastward move of USA. It is assumed a game-changer strategy with a potential to shift the center of geo-economics towards Eurasia instead of Asia-pacific region which is dominated by the USA and its allies. The New Silk Road has brought certain apprehensions with it. The idea of 'New Silk Road' by many nations is viewed as a form of neo-colonialism to grab local resources. Contrary to 'Old Silk Road', it is opaque and ambiguous for it is motivated in the power politics of China. Against this backdrop, the paper will make a comparative study of old and New Silk Road and examine various challenges to the New Silk Road. There is a need to analyse the implications of the New Silk Road and also explore the future prospects of the same amid the challenges that it faces presently, this paper shall try to meet these objectives

Keywords

Silk-Road, China, BRI, OBOR, New Silk Route, CPEC.

Introduction

The Chinese foreign policy underwent a decisive shift since 2012 when president Xi Jinping assumed power. He changed the traditional concept of Chinese foreign policy and adopted a utilitarian approach, from 'hide our capacities approach' to more assertive and 'Go Global Approach' (Jain, 2017). He declared "Socialism with Chinese characteristics",

characterized by mutual understanding, strategic trust, respecting each other's core interests, mutually beneficial cooperation (Lampton, 2013), multi-polarity, focusing on world community of a shared future with common interests (Wang, 2013), non-interference and discarding hegemonism (Wang, 2015) as core principles of Chinese foreign policy. This doctrine focuses on partnership rather than alliance between states, cooperation based on equal footings and inclusive international relations. To achieve these goals president Xi Jinping stressed on peaceful development with connectivity in terms of road, rail, sea links, people to people movement, internet, infrastructure etc through the notion of 'Civilizational partnership' and was named as 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI)* or 'New silk Road'- an advanced state of the erstwhile Silk Road project (Aleksandra and Cerenkova, 2016).

Drawing hugely from the ancient Silk Road the New Silk Road is regarded as the Chinese Marshall plan. Spanning over 70 countries representing 60 percent of the global population and around a third of global GDP, the New Silk Road initiative has been touted as a powerful vision of future global economy centered on China and an important measure to counter the geopolitical influence of USA.

Old Silk Road

The term 'Silk Road' was first used by German geographer Ferdinand Von Richthofen in1877 to refer to ancient trunk road crossing in central Asia (Foltz, 1999). The term 'Silk Road' is used to refer to a vast network of land and maritime trade and communication routes connecting the far east, central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Iranian and Anatolian plateaus, the Caucasus, the Arabian peninsula and the Mediterranean region and Europe (UNESCO).

Historians are divided on the usage of the term "Silk Road" that flourished in 100 BCE, as there were many roads, routes, paths that headed in the east-west direction. Some prefer to call it 'Silk Road or Silk Route' and others call it "Silk Roads". Those historians using term 'Silk Road' exclusively focus on the trans-Eurasian caravan routes that crisscrossed Eurasia's heartland. But others and mostly contemporary historians choose to call it "Silk Roads", they focus on the network

* Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is the official name of New Silk Road. Initially the Chinese name of 'New Silk Road' was translated as 'One Belt One Road Initiative' (OBOR) till 2016, but the word "One" seemed controversial and misleading, so the Chinese government in order to avoid any misinterpretation and criticisms over it named it Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)..

of sea lanes of Indian ocean, the red sea, the Mediterranean and other similar networks of maritime transportation in addition to land routes as part of the route (Beaujard, 2010). Even Ferdinand Von Richthofen differentiated between the two by calling Silk Road as a single route to the 'Land of Silk', whereas Silk Roads were the multiple trade routes between imperial Rome and Han China from which the commodity of silk used to travel to the various parts of world (Waugh, 2007). The road or roads are prefaced with "Silk", as it was the important commodity carried along these roads. The incessant movement of people and goods along these routes resulted in an unprecedented transmission and exchange of knowledge, ideas, beliefs, language, religion, customs and traditions (UNESCO). These roads not only served as a trading conduit but also as an important means of promoting cultural phenomena and exchange of information (Hahm, and Soon 2016). The downfall of the Tang Empire in China in the early 10th century declined the trade along the Silk Road, because with it an era of political upheavals started in China resulting in pandemonium that simultaneously led to trade decline. In the 13th century, the conquests of the Mongols ushered in an era of frequent and extended contacts between east and west. These increased contacts created a demand for Asian goods in Europe, which eventually led to a search for a safe route to Asia due to uncertainty on the old Silk Roads. The discovery of sea route from Europe to Asia in the late 15th century was the final nail in the coffin of the silk route trade. It was easier and safer to transport goods by water than over land that were facing problems of insecurity (Mote, 1999). With the discovery of the maritime route to India by Vasco-Da-Gama (1498 AD), the Portuguese Goa route (1510 AD) and the Malay port of Malacca (1511 AD) became important bases of trade with East diminishing the role and concept of "Silk Road".

New Silk Road

The idea of reviving 'Old Silk Road' was first made by Chinese president Xi Jinping (Tatar, 2013). In his speech at the University of Astana, in September 2013 the Chinese president stated that, 'to forge closer economic ties, deepen cooperation and expand space for development in the Eurasian region, we should take innovative approach and join hands in building an economic belt along the silk road; this was for the first time China presented world the idea of "Silk Road Economic Belt" (Wang. 2015). And at the Economic Leaders Meeting of the

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) held in October 2013 Xi Jinping unveiled the second part of his idea of reviving Silk Road, Xi Jinping stated that, "Since ancient times the south-east Asia region had a fundamental role as hub for 'Maritime Silk Road', now China wants to enhance the maritime collaboration with partners of Association of South-East Asian Nations, in order to create new network sea routes" (Jinping, 2013). With it, the idea of reviving old Silk Road was put forward by China before world under the initiative of "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). The BRI project has the main objective of building a large common Eurasian market, it includes various investment plans that in Chinese government's opinion are necessary to improve the economic scenario of the Asian continent, thus leading to deep economic and technical partnership and creation of free trade zones (Wang, 2015). Even before Belt and Road Initiative, the idea of reviving Silk Road was made by various countries from time to time like in 1998 Japan put forward the idea of reviving 'Silk Road Diplomacy' to enhance ties with central Asia. In 2011, the USA came forward with the proposal of 'New Silk Road' presented by the US secretary of state Hillary Clinton while her visit to India. India itself came with the 'Mausam project' in 2014 (Zhiping, 2014), but it was only China who put forward the revival of the road more tangibly in the form of BRI project (Wang, 2015).

Old Silk Road and New Silk Road: A Comparison

The old Silk Road was created more than two thousand years ago during the expansion and outbreak of political upheavals towards the west by Han dynasty of china (206 BC to 220 AD). It was stretched on about four thousand miles passing through central Asian countries before arriving in Europe. Apart from silk the main products carried were various Chinese valuable goods like textile, spices, olive etc and these were exchanged for gold, ivory and glass objects. The expansion of routes reached their peak under tang dynasty of China, but with the decline of tang dynasty, outbreak of political upheavals in China and invasions of central Asia by Mongols lead to the outbreak of crusaders and plunders on these routes thus reducing the safety of these routes (McBride, 2015). For many centuries this was the only route of contact between the two extremes of the Eurasian continent. This route served as an important channel in the development of Chinese civilization, of the Indian subcontinent, of Persia, the Arabic peninsula and Europe. The meeting between merchants, pilgrims, monks, soldiers, citizens of

different regions helped cultural fusion (McBride, 2015). One of the prime examples of this was the spread of Buddhism from India into Afghanistan, China, Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia.

New Silk Road or BRI in addition to the revival of old trade routes has two more aspects geo-political and geo-economics. Geoeconomic objective is creating a common market for Eurasia or coming nearer to Europe for trade expansion while as Geopolitical aspect is concerned with establishing China as a global hegemon. With the idea of revival of New Silk Road China is coming with new world order, they are reshaping world order moving away from traditional concept of treaties and alliances to infrastructure as basis, they are knitting world together just as USA knitted world together through alliances after cold war and Britain through network of colonies before world war second.

Belt and Road Initiative is called a 'Belt' as its ultimate goal is the creation of thickly integrated economic corridors rather than a transportation network linking two points, this follows not only ancient path but new regions also (Maçaes, 2016). The new Silk Road is defined as Chinese strategic vision, a wide policy aiming to solve internal and external challenges, not a well-defined strategy. The basic idea is to build a thick network of infrastructures facilitating the exchange of goods, knowledge and culture not only between China and Europe but also among those countries in Eurasia, Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe involves in it. The basic aim to facilitate the moment of goods, service and people for boosting intra-regional trade and investment while simultaneously stimulating economic development, (Hooghe, 2016). It is not only a network of infrastructure but a platform to promote and bolster economic integration.

The New Silk Road consists of two main connectivity networks, the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and Silk Road Maritime Belt (MSR). Silk Road Economic Belt has three main routes through Eurasia; the middle route with oil and gas pipelines (Beijing-Xi-Urumqi-Afghanistan-Kazakhstan-Hungary-Paris) the northern route with Eurasia land bridge (China-Russia-Germany-Northern Europe), and the southern route with transnational highways (Beijing-southern Xinjiang-Pakistan-Iran-Iraq-turkey-Italy-Spain), inspired by the Chinese admiral Zheng during Ming dynasty (1368-1644) the silk Road Maritime Belt has been shaped. It plans to connect China's east coast with Europe via the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean (The Strait Times 2018).

Implications of New Silk Road

New Silk Road is designed mainly to counter various issues China is dealing with, internally it will provide Chinese economy a chance to open markets for its products that have no place in Chinese saturated domestic market (Markus, 2016). Improving transport facilities will boost Chinese industry and solve the problem of overcapacity (Nichola, 2015). In addition to trade with collaborating countries, it will provide China access to energy and primary resources of these countries, the new connections will provide safer access to Chinese industries. Building infrastructure will guarantee demand for goods of Chinese heavy industries like iron, steel, cement, aluminum and glass which suffer from overcapacities (Grieger, 2016).

Moreover, many analysts regard Belt and Road initiative Chinese move to establish herself as an economic and political superpower, by changing the rules that are organizing world economic order today, the BRI is designed in such a way thereby giving China a chance to reorder it (Bruno, 2016). China avers that BRI is a movement to establish the multi-polar world (MOFA, PRC). Some western analysts consider BRI as similar to Americas Marshall plan, but fundamentally it is different, the difference lies in the sense that china's Belt and the road initiative (BRI) is not based on aid or foreign direct investment but on loan financing, the lone similarility between two is of achieving geostrategic objectives.(Shen, 2016). It is presumed by analysts that prime objective of BRI is to tackle the Chinese economic, political and security issues through the projects like China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Thai canal.

Conclusion

The New Silk Road (BRI) is a geopolitical and economic initiative inspired by the ancient Silk Road that once used to serve as an only meeting point between China and Europe. Starting from eastern China, the Ancient Silk Road followed various routes in Anatolia and uniting again in Istanbul and then dividing into the inner regions of the Europe. Anatolia was the bridge in between East and west and it was a major crossroad of the Silk Road.(Waugh, 2010) . The Ancient Silk Road reached the Pamir region (Mountain range in Central Asia) after going through Iran and Afghanistan's northern territory. This road branched into two arms, one arm passed through the southern part of Turkistan and other arm through India. The New Silk Road follows not only this

ancient path but new regions also. With the New Silk Road initiative China is drawing a new map of world economic order, making China a central power in the world. Beijing is seeking a bigger military and trade role in the world affairs especially in the Indian Ocean region. The Russian affiliation to BRI is making Russia-china-Pakistan triangle very important in the world politics. The objective of New Silk Road is to comprehend five bonds in five different spheres in which China is trying to improve the interconnections between different Asian countries. First is policy coordination and collaboration among the governments of countries located along the Road and Belt initiative. Second is to coordinate in the management of standards of construction network as the project necessitates the building of infrastructure like harbors, bridges, land transport channels etc. third is an exchange of knowledge and emerging sectors like information technology, biotechnology, new energy technology and new material. Fourth is collaboration in financial partnership to enhance cooperation in financial sectors (Chin, 2015). Finally BRI initiative focuses on the people-to-people connection as it will enhance interaction among people leading to the building of common identity (Yafei, 2015) .

With this initiative China is expanding its economic and political influence in the region and in the globe. For china BRI overland networks will enable it to increase its economic sphere of influence with China as centre of power in the world. The diversification of its trade routes will therefore enable China to reduce its dependence on shipping lanes, thus enhancing its economic security. The New Silk Road will facilitate strengthening of relationships in between countries through railways, transportation facilities, transnational gates, energy corridors, and natural gas pipelines thus bringing harmony, peace and economic prosperity.

Despite huge floating there are serious contradictions and apprehensions associated with this initiative both internally and externally. Internally its regarded as threat for Chinese security as with it the country will become vulnerable to security challenges especially to straits of Malacca (the strategic waterways that connect the South China Sea with the Burma Sea on its way to the Bay of Bengal and therefore a strategic place). Externally New Silk Road initiative is mainly criticized due to lack of transparency as nothing is visible; everything is designed, finalized and operated by China itself with the meager role of collaborating country. Another apprehension related to this project

is the question that, what will be the outcome of this initiative as the plan passes through highly political and economically unstable regions of the world (eg. hostile environment from central Asian countries like Afghanistan- which has been called graveyard of empires). There are some toughest areas of the world with serious instability through which BRI has to pass. Another apprehension is related to environment as what will be impact on the eco-system as China is using high machinery tools which has potential of polluting environment. Moreover given the huge nature of the project there are trepidation related to the accomplishment of the project as it took Europeans about three hundred years (as Vasco de Gama came in 1155 to India) to get territorial control on Asia and Africa, it took many decades to set New world order by setting world bank, IMF and certain other setups which worked in setting world order for trade and other development projects. So apprehensions for its boom and completion are there.

It is assumed that Belt and Road Initiative will improve infrastructure, physical connectivity across the region and has potential to be game changer by reshaping global trade. BRI will anchor world's centre of economic gravity in Asia with china as the centre of that centre, with majority of roads leading to Beijing. It is also assumed that the way china is proposing the trade partnership with that the major economies of the Asia will work together there will be no trade war, no alliance with face off against each other. it is also believed that with the expansion of routes China will probably seek to protect those routes (Land and Maritime) that means expansion of Chinese military bases, security arrangements, along with silk route. Also it is believed that BRI initiative will lead to multi-polar world thereby reducing USA's ability to decide unilaterally thus changing the geo-political equation. Despite many apprehensions related to this initiative BRI project is assumed as a game changer in the world politics with potential of global economic development without trade war, leading to new world order based on partnership rather than alliance. No doubt there are many global trade agreements in operation like Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)-an alliance for global development, but it has trepidation of promoting the interests of bigger partner generally (Seshadri, 2013). On the other hand New Silk Road project comes with the idea of equi-development with countries as equal partners. It is believed that to make it success BRI needs a multilateral approach that will allow participating countries to be involved equally in decision making so to foster the interests equally, only then the true idea and spirit of the BRI will be established.

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India's Aims in Central Asia and India-Afghanistan-Iran Triangular Relationship

Vinay Kaura

Abstract

India has been making efforts to engage with Central Asia. This is driven by two primary motivations: First, India is eager to diversify its energy supplies as it has recognized that its economic progress is linked with Central Asian hydrocarbon resources; and second, India wants to contain the growth of radical Islamist forces which pose greatest threat to India's security. The strategic location of Central Asia makes it vulnerable to geopolitical manoeuvring involving the United States, Russia, China, Pakistan, and India, with conflicting and contrasting objectives. The Afghan Taliban's resurgence coupled with weakness of the Afghan government has also created fresh uncertainties, while the ISIS continues to demonstrate its growing power.

The triangular relationship among India, Iran and Afghanistan, particularly involving the Chabahar port, has crucial implications for India's aims in Central Asia. The paper explores the interests that motivate India's recent efforts to step up its engagement with Central Asian countries, how the India-Afghanistan-Iran triangular relationship is aimed at serving those interests, and the attitude of other important regional players.

Keywords

Central Asia, Energy Resources, Great Game, Geopolitics, India.

Background

India has significant energy, economic and security interests in Central Asia. However, India's engagement with Central Asia has also been based on strong historical and cultural ties. India was intimately related to Central Asia through trade routes as well as successive waves of invasions on the Indian subcontinent from the mountain passes in the northwest. The consolidation of the British Empire, however, adversely affected the incessant flow of interactions between two regions. Furthermore, what unites South Asia with Central Asia is the popularity and prevalence of a generally more liberal brand of Islamic faith, also known as Sufism. The veneration of Sufi saints has been a widespread characteristic of Islam in both South Asia and Central Asia.

Once India gained independence in 1947, India's relations with Central Asia were shaped by larger dynamics of Indio-Soviet ties,

particularly after Indo-China war of 1962. During the Cold War era, Indian foreign policy had a distinct inward-looking orientation, which confined New Delhi's presence in Central Asia mostly to cultural exchanges. With the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, India gradually moved away from ideological straightjacket to strategic pragmatism, which should have prompted India to revitalize its relations with the post-Soviet Central Asia. But India failed to take advantage of the situation. C Raja Mohan has remarked: "Delhi was well placed to cultivate lasting partnerships with the new republics. India's struggle to reform its economy, reconstruct relations with major powers after the Cold War and reconstitute ties with neighbours meant Central Asia was never high on Delhi's foreign policy agenda."[1] In context of the changing geopolitical dynamics in the Central Asian region, India cannot afford to ignore the strategic importance of this vital region.

New Delhi's desire to reclaim for India the influence and cultural relations it once enjoyed with the countries of Central Asia before the dawn of colonialism can be reasonably realized through Afghanistan and Iran. This dimension will be discussed in detail. India's primary concern and focus of engagement in the Central Asia region is Afghanistan, which reflects both historical links and the intertwining of fate with Pakistan. Since the overthrow of the fundamentalist Taliban regime in 2001, India has pursued a 'soft-power' approach in Afghanistan by steering clear of a military role. India has focussed on providing developmental aid, administrative capacity building, and reviving cultural links. New Delhi, which has emerged the largest donor to Afghanistan in the region and fifth largest bilateral donor[2], has been trying to position its relationship with Kabul in the context of its energy and trade interests in Central Asia. On the other hand, India's approach to the five Central Asian states is often considered to have been less coherent and lacking in direction.

India'a Major Interests: Energy and Security

Central Asia is an increasingly important component of India's diplomatic architecture. India seeks to build stronger political relations and strengthen strategic cooperation with Central Asian states. In order to fulfil its broader objectives, India launched a new diplomatic initiative to actively engage with Central Asian countries in June 2012 with its 'Connect Central Asia' policy, whose framework "is based on pro-active political, economic and people-to-people engagement with Central Asian countries, both individually and collectively."[3] India's

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2015 landmark tour of the five Central Asian republics of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan was primarily aimed at breathing new dynamism into the 'Connect Central Asia' strategy. Modi became the first prime minister after Jawaharlal Nehru to undertake a robust regional outreach to Central Asia.

India's economic growth is critically dependent upon uninterrupted supply of energy resources. Presently India imports almost three quarters of its oil from abroad, much of it comes from the West Asian region. Thus energy security is of utmost importance for India's national security and foreign policy. With India projected to become ever more reliant on imported energy, reducing dependence on the West Asian sources and cultivating alternative sources of energy has become a vital concern.

Central Asia contains vast hydrocarbon fields. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are endowed with enormous hydrocarbon reserves, although Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan also have great energy potential. Moreover, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, being in the Caspian littoral, promise to open the door to other energy-rich Caspian states.[4] In addition, Central Asia has untapped reserves of uranium, making it attractive for India's civilian nuclear program. India is planning to sign a pact with Uzbekistan on the import of uranium.[5] Apart from domestic production, India presently imports uranium from Uzbekistan's neighbour, Kazakhstan, as well as from Canada.

Central Asia is thus of prime importance in India's energy security policy. During Modi's 2015 Central Asian tour, India and Kazakhstan signed five key agreements including a defence pact to enhance military cooperation and a contract for supply of uranium.[6] Over the past few years, the OVL, the overseas arm of India's state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has sought to make significant investments in Kazakhstan. For instance, Modi launched maiden drilling by OVL in the Satpayev oil block of Kazakhstan in July 2015.[7] Both the countries are discussing enhancing cooperation in hydrocarbons and nuclear energy sectors. During a meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) at Astana in September 2017, India and Kazakhstan discussed "ideas for stepping up the cooperation in energy sector, trade, economic, investment, transport and connectivity, agriculture, information technology, space, healthcare and cultural spheres between the two countries."[8]

Although the Indian Government has begun investing in oil fields in Central Asia, its policy on how to transport this oil to the Indian market is still evolving. Quite apart from the economic benefits from a closer relationship between India and Kazakhstan, the political benefits for New Delhi are equally significant, such as coordinated action to deal with religious radicalism and fundamentalism. In November 2017, Indian and Kazakh armies also conducted a 14-day joint military exercise in India's Himachal Pradesh to strengthen bilateral relations and achieve interoperability between the two armies. This was the second joint military exercise between the two countries; the first edition of 'Prabal Dostyk' was conducted in Kazakhstan in 2016.[9]

An equally significant step towards opening Central Asia to South Asia is the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline which is also being supported by Washington. Turkmenistan has world's second-largest deposit of natural gas, and the TAPI would permit it to diversify its exports by delivering energy to South Asian countries.[10] This ambitious pipeline will come from Turkmenistan to India via Afghanistan and Pakistan, bringing significant benefits to all parties involved. Out of the total 1,814 kilometres, the pipeline will run for 214 kilometres in Turkmenistan, 774 kilometres in Afghanistan, 826 kilometres in Pakistan through Quetta and Multan and finally reaching Fazilka in India. As this ambitious project is seemingly not directed against any country, its realization is less problematic. India has been engaged in protracted negotiations regarding this pipeline, intended to transport 30 billion cubic meters of gas from natural gas fields in Turkmenistan to India. The last ground-breaking ceremony took place in Turkmenistan in December 2015, in which India was represented by former Vice-President Hamid Ansari. There are reports that India is now taking more interest in the project.[11]

India has felt constrained by its lack of land access to energy-rich Central Asia, hemmed in as it is by China and Pakistan. Here comes the importance of International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) in expanding India's trade and investment links with Central Asia. The INSTC, which includes rail, road, and shipping transport from Mumbai in India via Bandar Abbas in Iran to Astrakhan in Russia and Baku in Azerbaijan, would be a trade corridor having immense potential helping India to develop its economic and strategic importance in Eurasia and Central Asia. Once completed, the corridor is expected to provide astonishing opportunity for high volumes of goods to be transported "not only between India and Central Asia, but also between the European

Union and South Asia, as an alternative to the increasingly volatile and piracy-infested shipping routes using the Suez Canal."[12] The INSTC can also evolve into a strategic counterweight to "the increasing regional ambitions of China through its One Belt, One Road Initiative."[13]

Jointly envisaged by India, Iran and Russia in year 2000, the much-awaited Corridor got delayed for 15 years due to the challenges relating to financing and infrastructure development, unsettled conditions in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, and international sanctions on Iran. Now things seem to be brightening up as New Delhi has accorded top priority to the INSTC project. A coordination council meeting was held in August 2015 between India, Iran, Russia and 10 other participating nations – Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Oman, Tajikistan, Turkey and Ukraine – in New Delhi that approved draft transit and customs agreements providing the legal framework for moving freight on the ship-rail-road corridor.[14]

Central Asia is of vital importance to India not just in terms of energy security but also for reasons of national security. After the disintegration of the USSR, India was interested to see the newly independent Islamic countries to insulate themselves from the toxic ideology of radical Islam as Central Asia has been a fertile recruiting ground for Jihadist groups based in the region. During the era of fundamentalist Taliban, India formed a common front with Iran, Russia and Central Asian Republics against Taliban. Though it has been almost one and a half decade since the overthrow of the Taliban, Afghanistan continues to face the scourge of Islamist extremism and terrorism stemming from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region.

The Central Asian states have been witnessing serious trouble over the spill over of these destructive forces into their region and destabilising their polities. Of late, there are serious concerns in Russia over deteriorating security condition in Central Asia in general and Afghanistan in particular because of the threat of the ISIS or *Daesh*. Similarly, India also views the region as a source of religious extremism and is concerned to check the rise of radical Islamist groups which may present a grave security threat. Given the transnational nature of these groups, including links with the Taliban, al-Qaeda and the ISIS, this has led to a high degree of uneasiness in New Delhi. The fear is that if the re-emergence of jihadist groups is not checked effectively, they will eventually pose a serious threat to India's security, particularly in Jammu & Kashmir. This concern is exacerbated by the situation in Afghanistan where Pakistan-backed and Taliban-generated insurgency

has undermined India's efforts to contribute in rebuilding Afghanistan into a regional trade hub.

The shared concerns over security are yet to be translated into concrete security cooperation. Central Asian countries have usually relied on an array of overlapping arrangements for their individual security. Bilateral ties have remained central to the regional strategic architecture. Coexisting with such bilateral links, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and its region-wide initiatives have been at the core of the overlapping multilateral security structure. Whereas Russia conducts numerous joint military exercises with Central Asian countries under the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), China does to some degree through the SCO. There is very limited direct military collaboration between the India and Central Asian countries.

It is also to be noted that the increased level of uncertainty in Central Asia and Eurasia following the disintegration of the USSR led to a search for new security arrangements that were able to address a series of emerging challenges. The SCO emerged as a major organisation linking Central Asian states with Russia and China. The SCO's model of security cooperation has relied on dialogue, consensus building, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. India and Pakistan have joined SCO as full members at the Astana summit on June 8-9, 2017 in Kazakhstan. India's membership was announced by the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who also welcomed Pakistan as a new member.[15] This membership is likely to help India further expand its footprints in Central Asia. Russia, along with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan had played an important role in getting a membership for India in the SCO.

India-Afghanistan-Iran Trilateral

Afghanistan is a landlocked country which has been dependent on Pakistan's Karachi port for access to the sea. This advantage has given Islamabad considerable influence over Kabul that it has periodically utilized to pressure Afghan governments. But this situation is going to change when construction of the Chabahar port is completed.

Located on the Makran coast, the Chabahar port assumes special strategic importance for India due to two reasons. First, it is the nearest port to India in Iran, which provides access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Second, it is located less than 150 km west of the Pakistan's

Gwadar port, making it ideal for keeping track of Pakistani or Chinese military activity. Despite the strategic significance of Chabahar for New Delhi, progress on it has been slow.

After the end of Taliban government, the need for India to expand trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia had multiplied but Pakistan refused India overland access to Afghanistan. By building a road from Zaranj on the Afghanistan-Iran border to Delaram, New Delhi got access to Kabul. But it still needed a port to send supplies to Afghanistan and Chabahar was a perfect location to do so.[16] Consequently, Chabahar port's development as India's gateway for overland trade through Afghanistan became imperative. The Vajpayee government signed an agreement with Iran in 2003 for the Chabahar Port. Even as the Delaram-Zaranj road was built, the port deal could not be materialised. Initially India embraced the idea but then lost interest due to two factors. Firstly, the concern about economic viability and security of the project, secondly, Iran was facing international sanctions over its controversial nuclear program. Though, the previous Manmohan Singh government understood the significance of the Chabahar Port, it also feared its adverse impact on the 2005 civilian nuclear agreement.[17] New Delhi's interest in the port project revived from 2012 onwards when Iran agreed to set up a joint working group to operationalize it as part of Afghanistan, India and Iran trilateral cooperation agreement.

Iran was equally reluctant initially. One of the major factors behind Iran's lack of enthusiasm to allow India's presence at Chabahar was the opposition by the Revolutionary Guards, which reportedly uses the port to ship arms to Yemen and other regional militant groups.[18] With the Iran-US rapprochement becoming a real possibility and with economic sanctions on Iran being lifted, the economic prospects of port project also brightened.

This project "created a new transport corridor that ends Pakistan's monopoly on seaborne transit trade to Afghanistan"[19] The Zaranj-Delaram Highway connects 16 of Afghanistan's "34 provinces, stretching from Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul, Ghazni, and Kandahar and to Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan province. The highway creates North-South transport corridors linking the Indian sub-continent and the land-locked Central Asia. The new infrastructure enables Afghanistan to access the Arabian Sea through Iran, and raises its potential to stimulate more investment from trade with outside powers like India."[20] In May 2016, India signed a historic three-nation deal with Iran and

Afghanistan to develop the Chabahar port and build a transport-and-trade corridor through Afghanistan that could substantially reduce the time and cost of doing business with Europe.[21]

Chabahar is not just a matter of developing a port. Afghan President Ghani's statement captured its significance: "Hundred years from now historians will remember this day as the start of regional cooperation. We wanted to prove that geography is not our destiny. With our will we can change geography." Commenting on the strategic dimension of the deal, Modi termed it a "a new foundation of convergence between our three nations."[22]

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi signed the Chabahar port contract and a trilateral transit trade agreement with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani in May 2016. Tehran's *E'temad* newspaper remarked that the signing of the trilateral agreements "will ring danger bells in Islamabad, China and Riyadh".[23] The project is rightly project as a game changer for India because it would provide connectivity to Afghanistan, Iran and Eurasia, strategically outflanking Pakistan. Moreover, India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's interest in connecting Iran's Mashhad with Zahedan, which is next to the Afghanistan border, via an India-built 900-km rail line with the Chabahar Port is also significant as it will open a new gateway to Central Asia and Europe. By joining the INSTC through Mashhad, India can boost its trade connectivity to Russia and Europe via the Baltic states.[24]

Indian Prime Minister Modi visited Herat in (western Afghanistan) in June 2016 and jointly inaugurated with the President Ghani the Afghan-India Friendship Dam, earlier known as Salma Dam. It was originally built in 1976 before being damaged during the civil wars. It has now been rebuilt by Indian and Afghan engineers, funded by New Delhi. Stressing India's commitment to Afghan peace and development, Modi said that "India will not forget you or turn away…Your friendship is our honour; your dreams are our duty."[25] The importance of the Indo-Afghan ties was further underlined by Afghanistan's decision to award Prime Minister Modi its highest civilian honour, Amir Amanullah Khan Award. During his speech after inaugurating the dam, Prime Minister Modi invoked iconic Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, whose home village lies near the dam and who settled down in Ajmer in Rajasthan: "Khwaja Moiunuddin Chishti, the first of the Chishti saints in India, said that human beings must have the affection of the sun, the generosity of the river and the hospitality of the earth."[26]

The Salma Dam is expected to help Afghanistan capitalize on opportunities thrown open by operationalisation of the Chabahar port. As Pakistan has refused to allow any Indian goods to travel over land Afghanistan, both the countries are working on strengthening alternative routes, including the launch of Kabul-New Delhi air cargo corridor in June 2017 and Kabul-Mumbai air cargo corridor in December 2017[27], as well as the Chabahar sea route. India's first major shipment of 1,30,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan through Chabahar Port was dispatched from western seaport of Kandla in October 2017, launching a trade route bypassing Pakistan. Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said that the shipment was "a gift from the people of India to our Afghan brethren" as well as the "the starting point of our journey to realize the full spectrum of connectivity from culture to commerce, from traditions to technology, from investments to Information Technology, from services to strategy and from people to politics."[28]

India's growing interest and influence in Afghanistan was reflected in Prime Minister Modi's announcement of providing Kabul with $1 billion in economic aid, when President Ashraf Ghani held talks with him in New Delhi in September 2016. During his India visit in October 2017, Ghani asked Pakistan to end its support for terrorist groups, while also talking tough about the issue of connectivity – refusing to join the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that would provide Pakistan access to Central Asia if Islamabad did not allow connectivity between India and Afghanistan.[29] The dialogue at the highest level between India and Afghanistan has been complemented by regular interactions between senior ministers, military officials and civil society representatives. This sends out an unequivocal message that Islamabad's specious objections against Indo-Afghan partnership would not deter New Delhi and Kabul from deepening their partnership.

Geopolitical Imperatives

Presently, Russia, the US, Iran and China are important strategic players in Central Asia, whereas India is a latecomer. Due to historical, economic and geo-strategic reasons, India's approach to Central Asia is intrinsically intertwined with its South Asia policy. This section deals with India's geopolitical equations with the powers that matter for the success of its Central Asian outreach.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Factor

The biggest impediment to peace and stability in Afghanistan is Islamabad viewing its relationship with Kabul through the prism of Pakistan's anti-India obsession. India's approach to Central Asia is thus conditioned by its tensions with Pakistan whose geographic position poses two simultaneous challenges to India. First, India's ability to access Central Asia has been vulnerable because Pakistan's geography, and its calculated policy of obstruction, cuts India off from the region. Second, Pakistan's geographic location astride the politically volatile regions of Central Asia has given it a natural advantage while dealing with Washington and Beijing. Jihadist and anti-India mindset has motivated Pakistan to engage repeatedly in unwanted and unwelcome intervention into the affairs of the neighbouring countries, both Islamic and non-Islamic, with disastrous consequences for all. At the end of the day, this policy may have thwarted Pakistan's ambitions for regional leadership but has not contributed to its regional isolation.

The Taliban's growing ability to penetrate Kabul and launch deadly attacks has created fresh uncertainties, while the ISIS continues to demonstrate its staying power and strength. Afghan security forces, beset by large-scale killings and desertions have been struggling to beat back the Taliban since US-led troops ended their combat mission in December 2014.[30] One of the things that India need to be concerned about the security situation in Afghanistan, is the potential for convergence among the various radical groups in Afghanistan-Pakistan region and its repercussions on India's interest.

India's primary concern in the wider Central Asia region is to ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan without which India's hope of having smooth linkages with the Central Asian region would hit serious roadblocks. Thus, India remains concerned about who rules in Kabul and wants to make sure that whoever does so is not antagonistic to India's interests. If Afghanistan again falls under the Taliban's sway, it would have a destabilising effect not only for Central Asian societies but also for Pakistan.

As discussed earlier, the opening of the Chabahar port is expected to pave the way for India's increased trade with and influence in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Most significantly, it is likely to transform Afghan-Pakistani ties. By providing Afghanistan with another outlet to the sea, the Chabahar port is set to reduce Kabul's excessive dependence on Pakistani territory and provide Kabul with leverage in dealing with

Islamabad, particularly on trade matters. Both Taliban and the ISIS are dangerous for India. Therefore, India must launch a dialogue with important regional players to stabilise Afghanistan. The Chinese efforts to include Afghanistan in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project need to nudge India to speed up the ITSTC connectivity initiative. Peace in Afghanistan is as important for India as it is for Iran and Russia. An India-led regional conference on Afghanistan must be planned simultaneously with robust counter-terror partnership with other Central Asian countries within the SCO format.

China Factor

India's relationship with China has always "demanded a tightrope act, improving bilateral relations while searching for new ways to balance the rise of Beijing's might."[31] In the past sixty years, relations between India and China have fluctuated wildly. Such divisive issues as future of Tibet, boundary demarcation, nuclear proliferation to Pakistan, and trade imbalances have fuelled intense debate over how India should deal with China. India's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era has been preoccupied with securing a favourable distribution of power in Asia, further developing its relations with the US in light of a rising China.

China's impressive economic growth as well as geographic proximity and shared border with the Central Asian states give it substantial influence in the region. Since China established diplomatic relations with the five Central Asian states in 1992, its overall trade with the region has increased over a hundred-fold. India has always been outmanoeuvred by energy-hungry China when it comes to aggressively and successfully securing lucrative energy acquisitions in Central Asia. China has emerged as the main trading partner of four of the five Central Asian countries.[32]

China's ability to compete successfully against India is also visible in its consolidation of transport networks with Central Asia that make up its own version of the Silk Road. It is pertinent to mention here that China is aggressively promoting the revival of the celebrated Silk Road trading route through the BRI. Projected as a network of regional infrastructure projects comprising roads, rail links, energy pipelines, and telecommunications ties, the major objective of the BRI, also referred to jointly as the 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR), is to win over neighbouring and other countries in the region through increased

trade incentives and transport connectivity.[33] If successful, the OBOR or BRI would make China a principal economic and diplomatic force in the Eurasian region. Apprehensive of China's real intentions, Modi government has refused to become part of the BRI.

India and Pakistan have become full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Security and counter-terrorism being high priority concerns for all SCO members, Pakistan is likely to feel the heat over its terror links. India's inclusion in the SCO has been viewed as positive news for New Delhi, which hopes to have a greater say in pushing for effective action in combating terrorism. As Indian diplomat Kanwal Sibal wites: "Within SAARC, Pakistan can join the shared rhetoric against terrorism without any pressure to clean up its act, as the only victim of its jihadi policies is India. Within the SCO, Russia, China and all the Central Asian states are concerned about terrorism and Pakistani policies and actions will be under scrutiny."[34]

However, due to China's close links with Pakistan, India should not have much hope as China has shown its true colours in the Security Council on the issue of Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi and Hafiz Saeed. Beijing is most likely to shield Pakistan on the issue of terrorism against India. Now, even Russia has been cautious of naming Pakistan as a source of terrorism against India. There are apprehensions in New Delhi that India might find itself isolated in an emerging strategic triangle of Pakistan-China-Russia, who are developing a common position on many issues crucial for India's national security.

Iran Factor

Despite both New Delhi and Iran publicizing the narrative of "civilizational ties" being the foundation of their bilateral relations, economic consideration are steering their engagement. Iran's hard bargaining skills have often made things difficult for India's successive governments. The trade in oil and gas constitutes the largest share of Indo-Iranian ties as India is Iran's second biggest oil buyer after China. India was among a few countries which had continued to import oil from Iran despite Western sanctions against Tehran over its nuclear program. But that was not easy. New Delhi faced several challenges in balancing pressure by Washington as Iran pushed for financial clearances in pending oil payments. Despite New Delhi's inability to do so due to sanctions, Iran often threatened India that it could lose stakes in strategically vital projects if it did not defy American pressure.[35]

However, it has become very clear that India is not going to abandon Iran just because Washington wants. In fact, if the Donald Trump administration shows strategic smartness, Iranian routes could well be utilized for access to Afghanistan. Only India could play such an immense role in facilitating this unthinkable engagement. However, maintaining active diplomatic relations with both Iran and the US would be a tightrope walk, and the Chabahar port's success would eventually depend on India's ability to walk this tightrope. India must continue to convince Iranian leadership not to trust Pakistan as a partner in the fight against terrorism as long as Pakistan's security establishment views violent extremist groups as a means of counterbalancing India and as a safeguard against an American exit from Afghanistan.[36]

American Factor

Last, and perhaps the most important player with regard to India's role in Central Asia is the US, which has had a history of mixed relations with India since independence. With the end of the Cold War, both countries have come closer. India's aspirations to exert greater influence in South Asia, the Indian Ocean region and Central Asia have found favour with the US. Hence, Washington has been supportive of an expanded Indian role in Central Asia, which is also evident in America's strategy for a 'New Silk Road' which would link India with Central Asia. The Trump administration has revived the New Silk Road initiative, first announced by then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in July 2011 in a speech in Chennai. Announcing her vision, Clinton had said: "Turkmen gas fields could help meet both Pakistan's and India's growing energy needs and provide significant transit revenues for both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Tajik cotton could be turned into Indian linens. Furniture and fruit from Afghanistan could find its way to the markets of Astana or Mumbai and beyond."[37]

The US recognizes the benefits of broadening and deepening good relations with India, especially by developing common economic interests through trade and investment. The American involvement in Afghanistan can also be interpreted as having expanded the political, economic and military space available to India in the region. Robert Kaplan rightly says that "As the United States and China become great power rivals, the direction in which India tilts could determine the course of geopolitics in Eurasia in the 21st century. India, in other words, looms as the ultimate pivot state."[38]

In August 2017, President Trump criticised Pakistan for offering safe haven to "agents of chaos" and accused Islamabad of taking billions of dollars of American money while undermining American interests in Afghanistan through terror groups. Declaring that the US "can no longer be silent about Pakistan's safe havens for terrorist organisations," Trump demanded Pakistan to change its behaviour "immediately."[39] Trump maintained that key decisions in Afghanistan should be taken by military commanders and determined by "conditions on the ground and not arbitrary timetables," because a hasty withdrawal will create conditions conducive for all terrorist groups, including the ISIS and the al-Qaeda, to thrive.[40] Trump's decision has come as a breather for the fragile Afghan government. The increased American military presence could allow the Ashraf Ghani-led Afghan government to focus its energies on the urgent task of governance, supplementing the US initiatives for regime stability.

But most importantly, Trump's positive comments have made Pakistan jittery. New Delhi's increased role in Afghanistan is now more consequential. When it comes to India's warm ties with Afghanistan, it is the prospect of deeper security relations that really rattles Pakistan. During his trip to India in October 2017, the US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson demanded the dismantling of terrorist infrastructure on Pakistani soil. He said that "there are too many terrorist organizations that find a safe place in Pakistan from which to conduct their operations and attacks against other countries," while assuring New Delhi that "in the fight against terrorism, the United States will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with India. Terrorist safe havens will not be tolerated."[41]

Although India has told the US that it would not send combat troops to Afghanistan, the scale and scope of India's security, economic and developmental involvement in Afghanistan is set to expand significantly. Enhanced Indo-US cooperation in Afghanistan is going to change the geopolitical configuration in Afghanistan. The US Defense Secretary James Mattis' statement on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing "through the disputed territory" of Kashmir was an expression of America's reservations about the OBOR, of which the CPEC is the most important part in South Asia, as well as a strong endorsement of New Delhi's position on the CPEC.[42] But it is rightly pointed out that America's "geostrategic support provided to India could exacerbate Asia's security dilemmas. These security

dilemmas are nested in relationships that link China, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, as well as China, Japan, and South Korea."[43]

New Delhi's reluctance so far to play the 'great game' in Central Asia has been dictated by its long-cherished tradition of strategic autonomy. India's evasion of either being seen in close military embrace with America or being identified with America's interests in Central Asia points to the deeply ingrained Indian preference for autonomy in external relations. The success of the Chabahar port would depend a great deal on how India convinces the US not to throw a spanner in India's efforts, in tandem with Iran, to gain access to Afghanistan and thereafter Central Asia.

Russia Factor

Russia has a large footprint in Central Asia. Its geographic presence in the northeast of that continent entitles Russia to be regarded as the dominant player in Central Asia. Under the leadership of Valdimir Putin, Moscow is engaged in arresting the decline in Russia's international stature and again asserting its power as a major claimant for influence in Central Asia and Eurasia. As Russia's energy-driven economic prosperity is coming under severe stress due to Putin's diplomatic and military gambles, the momentum of Russia-China relationship is shifting in favour of China, with Beijing setting the tone for all major global agendas. Both seem to be demonstrating a remarkable degree of policy coordination, taking their partnership to unprecedented heights.

The geopolitical and security interests of New Delhi and Moscow in this part of the world are compatible when it comes to dealing with the threat of Islamist extremism, terrorism, organized crime, and trafficking in arms and drugs.[44] Strategically, Russia has invested heavily in simultaneously engaging India and China, but it appears to have been reluctant to approve India's efforts to establish a military foothold in the region which can be explained by Russia's fears of encirclement by the US and NATO. Probably apprehensive that India's foothold at Tajikistan's Ayni airbase would ultimately open the door to American influence, Russia reportedly pressurized Tajik government to deny the deployment of Indian fighter aircraft at the base. With Russian resistance, India's plans went into cold storage.[45]

However, the INSTC, which has been 17 years in the making, is going to be operationalized next year with the first consignment from India to Russia. The project, conceived well before China's BRI, will

help India send goods to Russia and Europe via Iran. India can even consider working jointly with Russia on economically viable projects in the Eurasian region. There is a need for India to understand the strategic role of Chabahar port for evolving an integrated transportation network involving the INSTC. As underlined by P Stobdan, "Chabahar port can be connected with INSTC if the line is further extended till Mashad. In fact, Chabahar-Iranshahr-Zahedan-Mashad can be linked to the existing Eurasian railway line which connects other parts of Central Asia. Similarly, this route can hook onto ongoing corridor plans and programmes like Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and other multilateral transport initiatives in the region. India could tie up the loose ends of connectivity projects with Central Asia through both bilateral and multilateral mechanisms."[46]

However, the biggest challenge from Indian perspective is Russia's changing policy towards the Taliban. Although, Moscow labels the Taliban a terrorist organization, it has begun to maintain unofficial diplomatic links with Taliban fighters. This policy springs from the Kremlin's belief that the Taliban can be divided into two main camps; moderate or reconcilable Taliban members can be persuaded to participate in peace talks, whereas the hardline and irreconcilable elements are seeking to undermine Afghan security. Since the Taliban and ISIS are sworn enemies, Russia views Taliban as useful allies against the ISIS. The Modi government must step up efforts to bridge the gap between American and Russian positions on Afghanistan.

Conclusion

India's Central Asia policy aims to rekindle ancient ties, notwithstanding its dependence on the volatile Afghanistan-Pakistan region. India has been trying hard for the long-term integration of land routes linking it to Central Asia through the planned international North–South corridor, and the opening of the Chabahar port is a key plank of this strategy.

The shifting geopolitical landscape in Central Asia has a number of implications for India's security and economic interests. At present, India faces many challenges in Central Asia as there is no guarantee that its interests would be protected under changing geopolitical scenario. India's experiences in Central Asia over the past decade demonstrate the challenges of facing tough competition from China on energy issues and of having different views on regional security with Russia.

India has managed to secure only a shaky toehold in Central Asia when compared with other important players in the region. Deep mistrust still dampens higher levels of cooperation. While India is capable to forge meaningful partnership with Russia, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, China and Pakistan will continue to constrain India's ability for power projection in Central Asia. Moreover, China shares long borders with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Due to its growing military and economic cooperation with Central Asia, China has come to be seen posting a direct challenge to India's aims in the region. Lacking direct physical access, India lags behind both Russia and China in terms of trade and security cooperation with Central Asian countries.

India will have to strengthen its partnership with countries like Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and adopt a long-term policy towards this region. India's current trade volume with Central Asian region is minimal. The Chabahar route plus INSTC could boost trade volume substantially. However, India's role in Central Asia will depend on how it manages to convert the challenges into opportunities.

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Central Asian Integration and Regional Development
A Greater Central Asian Approach

Shahnawaz Qadri

Abstract

Two things determine the nature of a state's behaviour and relations with the world. A good economy with smooth borders brings a positive atmosphere in the relations among nations thus leading to cooperation. The otherwise is also the case i.e. bad economy and porous borders that shut the door for good neighborliness, soar relations and give rise to conflict. How Greater Central Asia concept(as an Approach) in the midst of fragile economy and porous borders-where ethnic tensions always simmer fits into the mechanism for security and development (trade-economics and security) in the light of theories of conflict and cooperation. There is another dimension involved i.e. the role of external and internal actors in this adventure. External powers like the U.S. (and others) have integrated Central Asia into 'Operation Enduring Freedom of Afghanistan'. India has played a constructive role in reconstruction and rehabilitation in post-war Afghanistan. The paper is an attempt to analyze how both the actors (internal and external) play in the adventure of Greater Central Asia.

Keywords

Greater Central Asia, Central Asia, Central Asia Republics, Central Asian Cooperation, Central Asian Energy, Afghanistan.

Introduction

Post-September 11 introduced a paradigm shift in the conduct of international politics. The *'war on terror* 'opened up' Central Asia region, which was in the lowest margins of the world where no human beast was interested in (Hill, Aug., 2002). Afghanistan war brought geo-political significance to Central Asia and received further attention and importance with the discovery of natural resources-gas and oil (Warikoo,1995). In this situation, India has played its role to promote, and benefit itself, the regional development of Central Asia linking Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. A historical and cultural understanding of relations among nations always helps to create a cooperative pace in the present context of the relationship. The ancient pre-colonial era was marked with trade links enhancing cultural and historical ties and post-colonial period had characterized with cooperation based on strategic equations

to benefit their national aspirations. In this dispensation, India and Central Asia including Afghanistan are part of that understanding by way of sharing strong historical, cultural relationships since ancient times. India and Central Asia also share common and contiguous borders, climate, and geographical; even religion provided a great kind of affinity as well. While *'Silk route*' (term coined by Ferdinand Freiherr von Richtofen in 1877) (Sreemati, 2011) represented a web of communication, peace and cultural exchanges among the countries present in Central Asia and South Asia; the "Great Game"(Arthur Conolly's term) concept involved power conflict among great powers for influence in the region(Sloan, 1999). The *'New Great Game'* is a conceptualized-a modern geopolitical situation in the CARs including the Middle East. Thus to explore India's role and reconstruction, and development of Greater Central Asia concept is the purpose of this paper. In this connection, I will be exploring India's policy of using soft power approach to delineate the significances of Greater Central Asia concept and its development; and the advantages it has for Indian interests.

In the discussion on Central Asia, two ancient concepts are of contemporary importance when it comes to the role of big powers in the Central Asian region: "Great Game" and "Silk Route". The imperial powers exploited the geopolitical significance to their advantage and used concepts like *Mackinder's 'Pivot'*. Sir, H. Mackinder in his book 'Democratic Ideals and Reality' in 1919 described Eurasia including Afghanistan as world Pivot and Heartland---vast landmass. His remarks led to new foundations like rimland, heartland which were further developed into the theory like Spykman' srimland theory etc. '*Heartland*', '*Rimland'* (in Nicholas John Spykman concept), *'Crossroads'* etc. for their imperial gains (Marlene, 2011). The geo-strategic and geo-economic significance and the great powers interest have made Central Asia region an arena of great importance (Warikoo, 2011). In this way, the role of external powers in the management of the Central Asian affairs has to do with the Greater Central Asian concept will be explored. This paper will be divided into two sections one, India's role of integrating the South and Central Asian countries within the conceptual framework of Greater Central Asia concept as regional development and cooperative instrument and second, Greater Central Asia Concept and the great powers rivalry in Central Asia in the light of conflict.

Greater Central Asia Concept (GCA)-An Approach: Conflict or Cooperation

The discovery of natural gas and oil introduced geo-economic importance of Central Asia region in the world. America's 'war on terror' in Afghanistan (due to the geographical proximity of Afghanistan with Central Asia) induced a new dimension in the importance of Central Asia *i.e.* geo-political and geo-strategic importance (Michel Hess, March 2004). Greater Central Asia concept is a geo-strategic construct involving the proximities of the South and Central Asian countries. That proximity is geographical, historical and cultural illustrates a fine reason for clubbing of the countries with common interest-economic and political. The Greater Central Asia besides five Central Asian Republics comprises Afghanistan, the Turkic Xinjiang region of China. It also extends to geo-strategically to Northern parts of Pakistan, *Khorasan* province of Iran, *Tatarstan* in Russia and even northern India (Joshi, 2011).

The propounder of GCA concept, Fredrick Starr, stated the basics to "development" of the Central Asian region is "trade" however, requires a good transportation system. Commenting on the troubles that the region had he added the prosperity of Afghanistan and its neighbours would never be possible in isolation (Starr, 2008). Linking Afghanistan's development and stability with Central Asia and of other neighboring countries, the Greater Central Asia (GCA) definition introduced by Barnett and Ahmed Rashid aimed at taking an inclusive view of the region. What they did was a re-look on the priorities of the region. This was done by reshuffling of focus into the region earlier based on security and democracy first, turn into development first and security, democracy the next. The belief was according to Ahmad Rashid, development is a key to human security and hence a path towards democracy. This has brought the necessity of thinking overall development of all Central Asian regional countries and the peripheries around especially Afghanistan. The positive aspect of GCA is that it treats South Asia and Central Asia into a single unit. Besides cultural, historical ties all countries of South Asia and Central Asia have common concerns; proxy wars, war on terror, energy security and above all achieving economic development and prosperity (Joshi, 2011). Common objectives and concerns find expression in cooperation. Thus in the midst of common concerns and various types of proximities for both the countries of South Asian and Central Asian region Greater

Central Asia concept is an endorsement and India has played a positive role in enhancing security and stability in the regional countries like Afghanistan and strengthening ties with Central Asian Republics through multi-pronged policy. Thus, India's role has an advantage to the GCA concept. Therefore, GCA concept is a cooperative mechanism that helps to ameliorate 'insecurity' and tensions between proximate countries and enhances prospects for two main issues: 'development' and 'security' or 'stability' via commercialization and connectivity of border interdependence.

a) GCA and the Silk Route: Mechanism of Cooperation for Central Asia

A necessary condition needed for regional development is linking trade and commerce through means of communication. Communication brings commercial ties among countries making trade and economics interdependent. The old silk route in ancient times provided a sufficient reason for the vast regional integration through trade and commerce. Silk route about 7000 miles was a good source of communication connecting Asia and Europe (Sharma, 2009). The silk route consisted of a series or web of inter-connected trade routes linking China, Central Asia, Northern India, the Parthian and Roman empire, Pakistan, Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. In this way, it was not only a trade route but also a way of cultural mix thus providing further integration to the countries contagious to each other. However, the Silk route lasted 15th century until newly discovered sea routes to Asia opened up (Warikoo, 2011). Post-colonization era introduced new trends in world economics and trade system noticeable as 'cooperation' with 'competition' that affected the nature and behaviour of nation-states. This required doing away with traditional routes of Central and South Asia and hence a concept of a renewed *silk route* strategy. However, in order to initiate a new kind of system of transport that links regions together also needs state-to-state cooperation. GCA in this way has nation-to-nation bilateral cooperation. For example, Uzbekistan signed an analogous memorandum of cooperation in the field of energy with Afghanistan in 2006. India in this manner got TAPI-1800 km (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and India-Dec 13, 2015) pipeline project is also a part of GCA (Joshi, 2011).

Another transportation set-up between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan is "Friendship Bridge" or "Freedom-Bridge" constructed over the *Amu Darya* connecting *Balkh (*Afghanistan) and *Termez* (Uzbekistan). From 2010 onwards, efforts were on to connect this bridge via a railway

to *Mazar-i-Sharief*. In this mode of cooperation, Tajikistan signed an agreement with Afghanistan and Pakistan for the exportation of hydro-based power **(**Starr, 2008). In this perspective building interconnectivity between Central and South Asian countries brings cooperation among them also do complements GCA concept.

b) Silk Route Strategy (The New Great Game): An Invitation to the Conflict in Central Asia

The "New Great Game" that is renewed in the form of a strategy involves major powers to fight for influence in Central Asia and more properly Eurasia. The "New Great Game" is a competition of influence over Central Asian region between great powers; the US, UK, including NATO members and the Russia and China on the other side of the spectrum. The influence is about to have actual control over the "pipelines, tanker routes, petroleum, consortium, and contracts" (Rob, 2007).

Indian Efforts in the Integration of GCA: GCA Approach

Adding Afghanistan- South Asian Country into GCA

Linking Afghanistan adds further significance to the landlocked region of Central Asia and hence beneficial to regional development (Mc Lachlan, 2000). Central Asia holds a key position because of its centrally located position. Scholars define Central Asia as such due to its centrality occupying an important space connecting civilizations-East and West. However, without Afghanistan described as 'cross-roads' of Asia renders Central Asia as trade route handicapped (Khan, 1998). Thus, any trade route could not avoid Afghanistan. Afghanistan and the famous *Silk Route* around Central Asia for their location turn to be a perfect meeting point. Moreover, Afghanistan shares borders with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Better connectivity will enhance good neighborly relations ameliorating security threats providing stability and development of the countries (Dutta, 2008). This is possible only when cooperation among the countries is strengthened and GCA concept bears that perspective of strength. India, in an environment of instability and crisis in Afghanistan, has been successful to increase significantly to the maintenance of ties between the two countries that to benefit for regional development. It was by the efforts made by India that Afghanistan became a member of SAARC (MEA, GoI, 2013).

Indian Efforts for GCA in Central Asia-Internal Player-GCA Cooperative Approach

Former Prime Ministers of India had a very low consideration of Central Asia and therefore 'neglect' in India's regional policy. It was in P.M. Narasimha Rao's tenure that India looked to the region as strategically important. Narasimha Rao held four visits, in 1992 to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and to Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan in 1995. In 2003 Vajpayee was the first Indian P.M. to visit Tajikistan and to Kazakhstan in 2002. P.M. Manmohan Singh paid a visit to Uzbekistan in 2006 and to Kazakhstan in April 2011. However, the "perceived neglect" ended up in 2014 with the NDA-II under Modi reinvigorated the regional policy re-emphasizing on the extended and regional neighbors (Ashok, 2016).

In India's policy of extended neighbourhood, the first thing to do was to overcome natural bottlenecks to connect India and Central Asia region. As no direct route from India to these countries is available without Pakistan, bypassing it became a necessity (Roy, 2011). To overcome bottlenecks in promoting links and conduct trade with Central Asia, Indian efforts ended up with the opening of many alternate routes that ultimately resulted in increased integration of the region with India's 'Connect Central Asia policy'. The establishment of The North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC) that link India with Central Asia made possible to bypass its transit dependence on Pakistan (Roy, August, 2015). Moreover, to overcome such hurdles, the construction, with India's assistance, of the Iranian port of *Chahbahar* (opened for trade in 2018) connecting with *Zaranj–Delaram Roadway (ZDR*) in *Nimroz* Province will serve as "India's gateway" to Central Asia. India has another alternate sea-to-land route option available running through the Iranian port of *Bandar Anzali* on the Caspian coast to gain access to the CARs and Russia. Such a project will also boost India's commercial trade ties with Russia and the Russian goods and minerals and agricultural products will be available in Indian markets hassle-free. That will ultimately help realize New Delhi's goal to expand its strategic reach northwards (Das, Oct. 2012).

Kazakhstan and India

India has highest trade with Kazakhstan among all the CARs and exports major commodities like tea, medical equipments, pharmaceutical, machinery, tobacco, valves etc. and imports in turn asbestos, soft wheat, steel, aluminum, wool and raw hides. Major trade cooperation (MOU

India's with Kazakhstan's Kazatomprom) between both the countries is in the field of export of Uranium from Kazakhstan for India's civil nuclear purposes and India will be able to import 120 tons of Kazakh Uranium annually (Mullen, 2011). Both countries have identified several sectors of cooperation necessary for the development of a strong relationship. They have thus identified major sectors and signed MOU's for cooperation in the "Space research, agriculture, products production, petrochemical complex, sulphuric acid plant, gold mining, and thermal plant". Kazakhstan and India cooperated and participated in International North-South Transport Corridor projects for enhancing future commercial and trade cooperation (MEA, GoI, 2013).

India and Uzbekistan

India, after two years Uzbekistan achieved independence, developed relations by signing a trade agreement that included "Avoidance of Double taxation", promotion of economic, industrial, and trade cooperation. In this way, India attained a major objective in linking Uzbekistan with South Asian partner for future trade and commerce activities. India has considerably invested in Uzbekistan in terms of trade, transfer of technology and IT sector investment. India assisted the establishment of IT parks and financed 30 million in the establishment of one of the IT centres at Tashkent named after Indian P.M. Jawaharlal Nehru (MEA, GoI, 2013).

Geographical proximity with Afghanistan determines the strategic significance of Uzbekistan. It is an active partner in the U.S. war on terror. Uzbekistan increases its cooperation with India in almost all fields and supports India's inclusion as a permanent member in the UNSC. Both the countries had joint ventures in automobiles and energy sector. "OZMinda LLC" is a joint venture concept (Ashok Minda Group-India and *Uzavtosanoat*-Uzbekistan) for the production of the driver information system and security system of automobiles. Both the country's Oil companies (ONGC Videsh limited-India & *Uzbekneftegaz*-Uzbekistan) signed MoU-2011 for cooperation in the exploration of oil and other sectors (MEA, GoI, 2013).

Kyrgyzstan and India

Both Kyrgyzstan and India have developed strong cultural ties. Kyrgyzstan's poor economy, lack of resources, geographical disadvantages as compared to other nations of Central Asia has limited its scope for further integration into the regional development system.

India, which is interested in the development of telemedicine and tele-education, e-network in Central Asia, also includes Kyrgyzstan. India desired to open a university-India-Central Asia University, a super-specialty hospital, and a diagnostic center in Kyrgyzstan. In the field of defense and security, India did provide help Kyrgyzstan's military personnel assistance in military training and assistance in the UN peacekeeping operations (MEA, GoI, 2013).

Tajikistan and India

Tajikistan holds a very important place in the "India's Connect Central Asia policy". The trade and commerce between the two since years have grown up touching US$ 31.22mn. Both had sign a joint declaration on "strategic partnership" in 2012 during the Tajikistan president's visit to India. In that visit, many MOU's were signed bringing two countries more close to many sectors like education, sports, energy, industry, textiles, labour and employment (Sarma, 2012). India successfully commissioned the renovation and modernization of Tajikistan's two units of *Varzob*-I hydro power plant through "BHEL" and "NHPC" and made an agreement to establish 100 MW hydroelectric power project on *Zeravshan River* in Tajikistan. Tajikistan also holds primacy among Central Asian Republics in terms of receiving the highest humanitarian assistance from India (Sarma, 2012). Tajikistan's location also finds very important for India due to its proximity with POK that also shares the longest border with Afghanistan. In this way, Afghanistan's stability is a common concern for India and Tajikistan (Kaushiki, 2013).

Turkmenistan and India

Turkmenistan sharing its borders with Iran and Afghanistan; rich in natural gas further improves its strategic significance in the GCA concept for cooperation and development. India's efforts to fit Afghanistan into the geo-political and geo-economic connectivity setting will be a connecting link in the maturation of GCA concept. It also fulfills India's security and energy needs in the coming future and a test of India's extended and regional outreach policies towards regional countries. Despite Turkmenistan's *neutral policy,* (Michael Denison, 2009) it has acted in a balanced way to carve out a favorable and conducive relationship with CARs and India. India' major energy investment TAPI may serve an important channel to link the economies of all these countries with each other thus turning to a mutual benefit and development discourse possible in all the fields but not the least in

Oil economy (MEA, GoI, 2013). In this way, India's past historical ties and cultural affiliations with the Central Asian region has acted as a catalyst in bringing Central and South Asia cooperation and economic integration. It can be said that the approach of cultural affinity and historical ties happen to be basic foreign policy (right now its regional policy) tools-Soft power tools in the hands of India to approach its regional countries and neighbours.

Cooperation in the Energy Sector: India and Central Asia Integration

Building connectivity to global markets, reviving the ancient *'Silk Route'* with the help of China, the Kazakh-China gas pipeline connectivity project and using Old Russian connection and building new ones are all part of facilitating Central Asia's connectivity with rest of the world (Das, Oct. 2012). On the other hand, energy security is also an important arena that requires cooperation. India is enhancing its relations with Central Asia for want of energy security (Sarma, 2009) & (Sachdeva, 2011).

Indian Efforts on Forum-Wise Towards Central Asia

Indian has occupied a permanent and full membership at SCO forum, which greatly channelizes its efforts to bring cooperative atmosphere for GCA concept where nation's behaviour leads to constructive relationship and development. Annual SCO summits will provide a forum to leaders of these countries to meet and discuss issues of bilateral and regional interest. India has been consistent and active in providing support on various forums to Central Asia's new initiatives and processes like CICA, Kazakhstan's membership in ASEAN Regional forum, and accession in WTO. In case of Afghanistan, India put serious efforts for its membership in SAARC forum and in April 2007, Afghanistan got admitted in the organization as a new member (Ashok, 2016).

Greater Central Asia Concept and External Players: GCA Conflict Approach

China-Russia vs. US-West: Conflict within Cooperation

Chinese constructive programme provides major commercial and communicative links facilitating greater integration of Central Asian countries necessary for regional development. The Chinese infrastructure cooperation; "efforts to revive the ancient 'Silk Route', offer of $10 billion grant and aid, and construction of China-Central

Asia Gas Pipeline Project" (1st August, 2012) all point to Chinese infrastructure investment policy of bringing Central Asia together under its reach more close in the event of growing competition called New Great Game (Shiping Tang, 2000). This China impact factor is all part of China's efforts in the field of Oil pipelines (from the Caspian Sea across Kazakhstan) gas pipelines (from Turkmenistan) and other planned roads and railways across Russia down to the Pakistani port of *Gwadar* wanting "to turn the region into a transit hub between the East and West". China's coherent Central Asia strategy has become more forceful in the wake of China's deepening engagement in Afghanistan notwithstanding Russia's 'sphere of influence' more coherently since its (Russia's) promotion of the Eurasian Project (Das, Oct. 2012) and (IDSA, Oct. 2013).

Russia regards CARs *near abroad*. It has floated a number of institutions including the CSTO, EURASEC etc. to maintain and further develop its ties with the Central Asian countries. Central Asian countries fall squarely within the Russian security parameter. Central Asian gas exports are through the Russian network of oil & gas pipelines. Russia has been taking steps to build new pipelines to preserve its markets in European countries (Shiping Tang, Mar.-Apr., 2000). This has been looked by the U.S.as Russia's occupy instincts towards European Markets. The U.S. and West with the result were promoting their own project of "Multiple pipeline policy". The West has thus invested in the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline to reduce its dependence on Russia (Majeed, 2008, 23). The U.S. presence in Afghanistan formed the pillar of its influence in the Central Asian region. Advocating its (the U.S.) aims to strengthen democratic institutions and economic reforms, the U.S. policy, would have been a welcome in Central Asian region but any effort to disturb the regional configuration that may disturb Russia and China may further heighten the chance of instability. Moreover, the over-heated arguments over issues that the CARs regarded internal issues (human rights violations and rigging in elections) further caused the vent to the U.S. influence in the region (Sanjay, 2011). Now the general position with respect to America, it wants to play the role of the balancer. This may further heighten the chances of conflict if the cooperation between Russia and China lift the balance in their favour aimed great powers policy position with respect to Central Asia and South Asia-Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The U.S. conducted Turkey experiment—as a model of the future political structure in the immediate of post-Central Asian independent era to reach to *Russia's*

belly (Troitskiy, 2007). In recent years, the configuration has rather twisted into zigzag of cooperation within the conflict. While, there is a side of cooperative mechanism brought by China and Russia (regional players)—with the U.S. on the global fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. Economically with Asian giants (like Japan) and others (EU), the U.S. designed to expand its influence and cut the others has eventually twisted the course of cooperation into conflict and camp-sized Central Asian region into US-Japan-EU vs. China-Russia-Iran poles. Whereas geo-politically the nature of scramble for control over the region aptly redefined as New Great Game economically the Russia-China efforts through SCO, BRICS and other Asian forums are trying to balance the Western-dominated—the U.S.-EU and other allies—world economic model. This, in turn, has further turned Central Asia into a mode of scramble economically looking for aid and grant to boost their fragile economic system. Whether newly developed China-Russia (we can say Asian model now) international economic model provides a better attraction to Central Asian regional countries or the Western model of World Bank, IMF etc. is the new line of a scramble. Notwithstanding China's experiment with Pakistan providing aid and loan like CPEC, has proved attractive to Pakistan, at least volcanizing India's fears. Whereas the U.S. deepening relations with India and its (U.S.) desire that India to play an effective role in Central Asia has ignited Pakistan's fears have caught the Greater Central Asia concept into vulnerability. Moreover, the great powers growing interests in the region has further given rise to conflict within cooperative efforts made by India to bring Central Asia integration a developmental plank through the GCA approach. Thus within cooperation among China and Russia over the geo-politics of oil and energy is growing a deep conflict over Greater Central Asian region due to great powers desire wanting to influence the region (Shiping Tang, 2000). The net configuration has been a camp division of U.S.-West on one side and the Russia-China on the other side. Seen within the GCA approach great powers invest in the Greater Central Asia (Central Asian and South Asian-Afghanistan countries) signifies a fight leading to conflict. Whereas the regional players like Russia, China play a cooperative role at least to block U.S. expansion leads to conflict. India's role of using the GCA approach has tried to integrate borders and economy of Central Asia and South Asia leading to greater regional development.

Conclusion

It can be said that whereas India's position with the new "Connect Central Asia policy" has reinvigorated to intensify its foreign (here regional) relations (policy) with a strong and rejuvenating friendship corroborates to India strong connect with the regional countries. Washington and Iran see India's role as-extended neighborhood very friendly and important for tightening screws of Central Asia stability. While the U.S. has taken on board India as an important partner fighting terrorism, fundamentalism, extremism, and counter China. In this connection, India's new approach of integrating its foreign relations has gone well within the perspective of its extended neighbor and regional policy.

Using the GCA approach one would easily find India's role of the Central and South Asia integration. Therefore in the GCA concept, India has provided a cooperative environment in which the commercialization and communications between Central and South Asian countries have given rise to interconnectedness adding further prospects of regional development. Further India emphatically has tried to develop through the bi-lateral system a web of communication easing out trade and security vulnerabilities. In Afghanistan, India's role has been appreciated by all the Central Asian countries. Its policy towards its immediate neighbours has also earned fame internationally with the U.S. wanting to play its better role further in Central Asia. In this sense seen in the light of the GCA, the approach highlights the prospects of development and minimization of insecurity. Therefore, one would find a cooperative mechanism developing within the confrontational politics seen in the light of Central Asian fragility and presence of Pakistan in geo-strategic politics.

However, seen in the light of external power's invest a series of development has led to giving rise to conflict in the form of a scramble among great powers. For example, the 'Moscow and Beijing coordination' has led to a convergence of engagement on several issues. Russia and China have cooperated with the U.S. and willingly accepted the U.S. presence in Central Asia on the issue of fighting terrorism and extremism, instead of balancing the U.S. in the region while the bigger fratricidal tussle remains. Since the U.S. (and the allies) is a common enemy and an intruder into the regional dynamics of Russia's sphere of influence and China's economic corridor has led to both (China & Russia) cooperate. However, China' infrastructure

investment and connectivity politics to open Central Asia for its market seem uncomfortable for Russia. Russia had 'accused China of "quietly conquering" the 'Russian Far East'. Apart from confronting a common enemy in international arena-the U.S. dominancy fears, (of being encircled) "Russia's China fear" and "China's Russia fears" (Unnikrishnan, Nandan & Purushothaman, Uma, 2015) - has a tendency of risk and suspicion. Therefore, GCA as an approach of Central Asian integration has given rise to conflict among the great powers owing to all wanting the influence over it. In their search for influence they have, mapped Greater Central Asia in their policies has caused concern among all of them. The U.S. long-term presence in Afghanistan to influence Central Asia, China is deepening engagement in Afghanistan and Central Asia and Russia's Central Asia and Afghanistan as *near abroad* have given rise to fears among all on the scramble over Greater Central Asia.

Implications

'The rupture of the relationships over a conflict of interest in Central Asia is a real possibility that would spell disaster for the region and beyond.'

Central Asia integration a developmental plank through GCA approach has two probable implications:

1. Great powers approach towards Greater Central Asia has a zigzag line of co-relationship. China and Russia cooperate to downsize U.S.-West influence. Therefore, there is a simmering zigzag line of cooperation dominated by conflict.
2. Aimed its role in reconstruction and rehabilitation in Afghanistan India's imagination to play a constructive role in Central Asian Republics is a good take. Using the GCA approach to integrate borders and economy of Central Asia and South Asia—Afghanistan—leading to greater regional development has been well taken in Central Asia and South Asia.

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Geo-economic Significance of Central Asia for India

Tariq Ahmad Lone

Abstract

Central Asia has vast deposits of hydrocarbon resources. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. There is a tremendous increase in the demand for energy in the country. India is over-dependent for its energy resources over the unstable west Asia. To meet the growing demand for energy and sustain the growth rate of economy India needs to plan the sources of the energy supply from the new avenues. The central Asian region can be one such avenue. The region is not only in close proximity to India but India has also historical and civilisational links with the region. This study provides information about the energy potential of Central Asia and the rivalry among the powers of the world in general with special focus on India's role. It also analyses the historic, current and future trends in relations between India and Central Asia.

Keywords

Central Asia, Energy Resources, Energy Potential, Hydrocarbon Resources, Oil Production.

Introduction

Central Asia, the landlocked continental area, comprises of five republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The region lies at the heart of Eurasia. These states got their sovereignty after the split of the Soviet Union in 1991. The disintegration led to an economic slump in these Central Asian countries. The three states Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan are on the track of rapid recovery in last decade stimulated by growth in energy exports mainly oil and natural gas. This trend is reinforced by the rise of energy demands across the world. Though energy resource endowment and the size of the energy reserve deposits varies from country to country, these states equally ponder advantageously utilizing the revenues generated by oil and gas for their economic development. The region has received further global attention due to increasing energy demands. Much of the energy resources remained untapped during the Soviet era. The disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991 has changed Central Asia into a centre of global politics. The recently independent states of Central

Asian republics have been firmly put into geopolitics among the major powers for their huge unexploited energy reserve deposits discovered after their independence.

Central Asia has vast deposits of hydrocarbon resources. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. There is a tremendous increase in the demand for energy in the country. Leena Srivastava and Ritu Mathur argue that "high growth in GDP results an increased output of goods and services, having implications in terms of increasing energy requirements in the country." (Asian Development Bank, 2009, p.2). To meet the growing demand for energy and sustain the growth rate of economy India needs to plan the sources of the energy supply from the new avenues. The central Asian region can be one such avenue. The region is not only in close proximity to India but India has also historical and civilisational links with the region.

This study provides information about the energy potential of Central Asia and the rivalry among the powers of the world in general with special focus on India's role. It also analyses the historic, current and future trends in relations between India and the region of Central Asia.

Recently, Central Asia gained attention due to increase in the number of oil and gas fields exploited. This happened due to change in the outlook, with emerging focus on the number of new energy markets which surround Central Asia. The surge in the investment from the eastern countries has facilitated the Central Asian republics to diversify their export markets, improved transportation facilities, better exploitation of resources and less dependence on Russian Pipeline Network. China in the east and India in the south are the neighbouring states of Central Asia region. The neighbourhood of the world's two fastest-growing economies has led to the rapid development in Central Asia's energy market. China has invested heavily in the energy sectors in the region and constructed oil refiners and pipelines across the region to meet it's domestic energy demands. China maintains its commitment to a non-zero sum game based on mutual benefits. India's engagement and consistent efforts to take the advantage of the huge energy reserves of the Central Asian region have increased significantly over the years. Following is given the statistical data of Central Asia energy resources.

Central Asia Energy Resources

Table 1
Central Asia Republics: Proven Oil Reserves in Thousand Million Barrels

Country / Year	1995	2005	2014	2015	2016
Kazakhstan	5.3	9.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
Turkmenistan	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Uzbekistan	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Total	**6.1**	**10.1**	**31.2**	**31.2**	**31.2**

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy. (BP Statistical Review, June 2017, p. 12).

Table 1 presents the proven oil reserves of Central Asian states from 1995-2016. As per the above statistics, Kazakhstan has 5.3 thousand mb/d of proven oil reserves; Turkmenistan has 0.5 and Uzbekistan 0.3 thousand mb/d. There was a significant increase in the proved oil reserves of Kazakhstan and reached from 5.3mb/d in 1995 to 30 thousand mb/d of oil in 2016. Similarly, the data shows there are also increasing, although constant from 2005 onward, from 0.5 and 0.3 to 0.6 both in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan respectively. Among the three republics, Kazakhstan has the highest share of 1.8% of worlds total proven oil reserves.

Table 2
Central Asian Republics Oil Production in Thousand Barrels per day

Country / Year	2005	2009	2013	2015	2016
Kazakhstan	1294	1609	1737	1695	1672
Turkmenistan	193	214	240	261	261
Uzbekistan	115	95	61	57	55
Total	**1602**	**1918**	**2028**	**1994**	**1988**

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy. (BP Statistical Review, June 2017, p.14)

Table 2 depicts the oil production of Central Asian republics from the years of 2005, 2009, 2013, 2015, 2016, which were 1602 barrels per day, 1918 barrels per day, 2028 barrels per day and 1994 barrels per day and 1988 barrels per day in respective years. Among the Central Asian republics, it is the Kazakhstan which leads in oil production at the end of 2016 which is 1672 barrels per day. The oil production

was increasing constantly from 2005 onwards till 2013. In the last two years, there is a slight decrease in the production of oil in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as the production decrease from 1737 thousand barrels per day to 1695 barrels per day in 2015 and further to 1672 barrels per day at the end of 2016. Similarly, the production in Uzbekistan dropped from 115 barrels per day in 2005 to 95 in 2009 and from 95 barrels per day to 61 in 2013 and further below to 57 and 55 barrels per day at the end of 2015 and 2016 respectively. The production in Turkmenistan is constantly increasing. It increases from 193 barrels per day in2005 to 231 barrels per day at the end of 2016.

Table 3
Central Asian Republics: Proven Gas Reserves in Trillion Cubic Meters

Country	2002	2005	2014	2015	2016
Kazakhstan	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.0
Turkmenistan	2.3	2.3	17.5	17.5	17.5
Uzbekistan	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	**4.8**	**4.8**	**19.6**	**19.6**	**19.6**

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy. (BP Statistical Review, June 2017, p. 26).

Table 3 presents information about the proven gas reserves in Central Asia republics from 2002 to end of 2016. Among the CARs, Turkmenistan is the leading state which has highest proven gas reserves. The total proven reserves of gas of CARs were 4.8 trillion cubic meters in 2002 which have increased up to 19.6 trillion cubic meters at the end of 2016.

Table 4
Central Asian Republics: Gas Production in Billion Cubic Meters (BCM)

Country	2006	2009	2012	2014	2015	2016
Kazakhstan	13.4	16.5	17.2	18.7	19.0	19.9
Turkmenistan	60.4	36.4	62.3	67.1	69.6	66.8
Uzbekistan	56.6	55.6	56.9	57.3	57.7	62.8
Total	**130.4**	**108.5**	**136.4**	**143.1**	**146.3**	**149.5**

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy. (BP Statistical Review, June 2017, p. 26).

The Table 4 represents the gas production in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan from year 2006 to the end of the year 2016. The gas production in Kazakhstan increased constantly from 13.4 bcm in 2006 to 19.9 bcm at the end of 2016.In Turkmenistan it increases from 60.4 bcm in 2006 to 66.8 bcm at the end of 2016. However, in 2008-2009 the gas production in Turkmenistan decrease drastically due to global recession and demand for gas in Europe and domestic demand in Russia started to decline rapidly.(Vasanczki, November 2011, pp-9-10). Lastly, the production increased from 56.6 in 2006 to 149.5 bcm at the end of the year 2016 in Uzbekistan. The over all production in all the the three states increased from 130.4 bcm in 2006 to 149.5 bcm at the end of the year 2016.

Table 5
Production from Mines (tons Uranium/tU):

Year / Country	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**
Kazakhstan	6637	8521	14020	17803	19451	21317	22451	23127	23800
Uzbekistan	2320	2338	2429	2400	2500	2400	2400	2400	2385
Total	**8957**	**10859**	**16449**	**20203**	**21951**	**23717**	**24851**	**25527**	**26185**

Source: World Nuclear Association, 2015 (http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/kazakhstan.aspx)

The Table 5 represents the Uranium production in the two countries of the CARs from 2007 to the end of the year 2015. Which increases constantly from 6637 tons in 2007 to 23800 tons at the end of 2015 in Kazakhstan and it increases from 8957 tons in 2007 to 2400 tons at the end of 2014 in Uzbekistan. But the data shows the decline in production of the uranium in the year 2015 in Uzbekistan.

Kazakhstan's production of the uranium from mines is largest in the world. Kazakhstan's production of uranium is 39% of world supply from mines in 2015, followed by Canada (22%) and Australia (9%). At the same time, Uzbekistan produces the world's seventh largest share from mines.

For a long time, the energy infrastructure of the Central Asian region remains under-developed and that has obstructed the path of transforming the raw material into the output. Moreover, the region relied on the international companies to provide export routes. The region mostly was dependent on Russia's ageing pipelines. As a result, there was secondary access to these states to the Western markets. Central Asian republics wanted to diversify their export destinations

after they attain sovereignty. But there are several challenges that discourage the Western companies from investing in the region. These include insufficient infrastructure, accessibility and security concerns in the region. As a result, the large quantities of oil and gas resources remain untapped and unexploited. This restrained the region from cheap transport and access to globalized economies. As a result, the costs are higher as compared to the rest of the world. The region is in a continuous effort to deal with these obstructions by various steps in the form of various agreements and programs, like "CAREC (Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation) program", and the cooperation like CNPC (China National Petroleum Corporation), TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India), BTC (Baku –Tbilisi-Ceyhan), and other pipelines. All these efforts will help the region to not only lessen it over-dependence over the Russian infrastructure but will also connect the region with the market-driven the globalized economy.

From the details given above, it can be seen that there are vast deposits of hydrocarbon resources in the Central Asian States particularly in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. After the Soviet Union disintegration, these states have made significant efforts in the process of transition. Given the huge demand for the energy resources in global markets, these states paid substantial attention to the development of the energy sector. Central Asia has a geo-economically advantageous location. Some of the fastest growing economies in the world are surrounding the region. Furthermore, the region's resource potential has not only become the pulling factor for the attention of the world giant powers and the emerging economies of the world but has also been crucial for the growth of home economies. Because the most part of the GDP share of these states is the energy sector.

The Central Asian region has become a ground for competition for energy resources among the world powers like USA, China, India, Russia, Turkey and Iran, etc. The intense rivalry among these powers referred as the "New Great Game." In the "New Great Game", every power is trying to increase its influence in the region, directly or indirectly. There are both strategic as well as the economic interests of the external powers in the region. But, it is the economic interest which pre-dominates the strategic one. The current trend of the 'New Great Game' in Central Asia makes the observations of Mackinder and Rudyard Kipling relevant. Mackinder's is relevant when he said that, who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island, who rules the World-

Island commands the World. And Rudyard Kipling, the famous British writer said that when everyone is dead, the Great Game is finished. Not before. Changing geopolitical and geo-economic scenario of the world motivates the superpowers to increase their dominant influence in the region. On the one side, the rivals are in a severe competition to tap up as much energy potential of the region as they can. On the other hand, the competition pushes these powers to dominate this 'heartland' to maintain their dominance in the world at large. This economic and strategic significance of the region has sustained and intensified the rivalry and competition among these great powers. Notably, in this New Great Game unlike the original Great Game (the 19th-century diplomatic confrontation between the Russian and British empires over and around Central Asia and Afghanistan region) the local states are also a part. These are now sovereign states. These states are now trying to take advantage of this competition to their respective advantages and try to attract the capital in their economies for taping up of the energy potential to boost their economic growth.

This landlocked region that lies between China, Russia, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan has possibly largest energy resources outside the Gulf region. Kazakhstan has significant oil resources. Turkmenistan has a substantial amount of gas reserves. Uzbekistan has moderate hydrocarbon resources. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan meanwhile, have surplus hydropower. But, strangely India does not seem to have understood strategic significance of their region so far unlike China. With $46 billion trade in 2014, China is the biggest trading partner of the Central Asian region followed by Russia at $28 billion and India's trade stands only at $1.6 billion (Muzalevsky, 2016). Central Asia has vast deposits of hydrocarbon resources. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. There is a tremendous increase in the demand for energy in India. Energy is also vital input across all the sectors of the economy. India's high growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) results in climb in the output of goods and services. The energy consumption in India is fourth largest after China, United States of America and Russia. The total primary energy consumption from crude oil is 29.45%, from natural gas it is 7.7%, from coal 54.5%, and from the nuclear energy the energy consumption amounts 1.26%, from hydro-electricity it is 5.0%. Besides, from biomass electricity, wind power, and solar power is 595 MW in the year 2013. India is dwelling place of 18% of the world's population. But India uses only 6% of the

world's primary energy (India Energy Policy, Laws and Regulations-Handbook, 2015, p. 56). India's energy consumption has almost doubled since 2000 and the potential for further growth is enormous. According to IMF World Economic Outlook Report April, 2017, India's economy is third largest in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) and ranks 6th in terms of nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP). India's economy is growing speedily and policies are in place to focus ahead with the country's modernization and an expansion of its manufacturing. Achievement of well planned and well-managed expansion of energy supply of energy can prove a boon for the country in terms of improving welfare, standard and quality of life of 1.3 billion populations. The requirement of energy needs in the country is ever increasing. The energy consumption in India is fourth biggest after China, United States of America and Russia. Policy-makers at national and state levels are deepening their efforts to ascertain that energy is a boon, rather than an impediment, to India's advancement, looking to removing impediments to investment in energy supply while also focusing on energy efficiency and pricing reform.

Historically, India and Central Asia are not unfamiliar with each other. Indeed, the Central Asian relationship was significant at the time of Delhi Sultanate and it continued till the demise of Mughal Empire. Indo-Central Asian relations began to fade only after imposition of British rule in the subcontinent. But again, after the independence, India remained the close ally of the former Soviet Union and has close ties with these states being part of former USSR. These ancient ties serve as the basis for the relations between India and Central Asia. India has historical and civilizational linkages with Central Asia. These historical and civilizational bonds with Central Asian states have been translated into warm and friendly relations. India is one of the first countries to open diplomatic missions in the capitals of all the five Central Asian Republics immediately after independence. India realized the strategic importance of the Central Asian region very early. Relations between India and Central Asia started off well when Prime Minister of India Mr. Narsima Rao undertook visits to newly independent states after few years of their independence from the erstwhile Soviet Union. He visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 1992 and followed it with visits to Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan in 1995. To Tajikistan, it was Prime Minster Atal Bihari Vajpayee who visited the state in 2002. India and Central Asia had the robust exchange of visits of their leaders and have signed a number of cooperation agreements.

India's culture has deep linkages with Eurasian past due to active trade along "Silk Route" between India and Eurasia in past. Silk route, besides trade route, acted as a route for transfer of ideas, religions and culture that enriched both the regions. Buddhism has spread across the steppes of Eurasia. The warmness for Indian culture is expressed in Central Asia's deep curiosity in Indian cinema, Indian art and music. This curiosity intensified further during erstwhile Soviet Union times. Despite that India did not capitalize and remained far behind in strengthening relations with the region. As per many analysts, India has been a bit late to reach out to this energy rich and strategically important region of the world largely due to natural obstacles like limited land connectivity and hostility with Pakistan and unstable Afghanistan. Prof Ajay Patnaik noted that; "India's strategic concerns are tied up with Central Asia region and Central Asia may also be a future source used to supply India's energy requirements. Despite these strategic imperatives, India took a while to focus on its strategic interests in Central Asia. As a result, its level of engagement has below that of other powers and the advantages it had due to its historical and cultural affinity with the Central Asian region has lost."(Patnaik, 2011, p. 91). In almost similar note K Subramanian put forth the point that, "India is caught in the Central Asian vortex. It woke up rather late to the strategic importance of the area. It was only in 2012 that the Connect Central Asia policy was launched. Though in our diplomatic parlance we refer to the historical and cultural ties, our relations with the CARs in recent decades have remained low. In later years, our attention was more to counter Pakistan-sponsored terrorism than to promote economic cooperation. During the same period, China vastly expanded its economic relations with the region through trade, investment, etc."(Subramanium, 2015). India needs to pursue its historical connect to CARs to give impetus to cordial relations to the CARs. New Delhi realized the significance of this vital geostrategic space and already took several initiatives to revive the ancient linkages to Central Asia. Some of the initiatives are 'Connective Central Asia policy', building Chabahar port in Iran and Zeranj Delaram road in Afghanistan etc. These initiatives are positive developments in connecting the two regions. Moreover, focus should be given on the alternatives connective projects keeping in view volatile Afghanistan and uncertainty in relations with Pakistan. It is crucial for India to have a foothold on this vital geo-strategic space.

India recognizes CARs as close political partners in the key element of foreign policy of 'extended neighbourhood'. India is pro-

active to reach this region mainly through its CCAP, based on economic engagement, political engagement and people to people connect with CARs.

India is in a continuous effort to rebuild Afghanistan. India already built Zaranj Delaram road and invest in many other infrastructures to make Afghanistan suitable link to connect central Asia. India realized the importance of the Afghanistan for the entire south and Central Asian region. The way forward is in converting Afghanistan into a hub for trade and energy, connecting Central Asia and South Asia. The land mark agreement over the construction of the TAPI pipeline has put forth the importance of the Central Asian region for India's future energy plans.

Many analysts believe India fails in fulfilling aspirations of Connect Central Asia Policy (CCAP) until recently. Moreover, India remains an insignificant player in the New Great Game whereby unable to match with other powers like Russia and China. On the one side, there is a discussion about Chinas increasing geo-economic influence in India's geostrategic space- Central Asia at the same time, India's apparent position in Central Asia reflects unwillingness and inability to invest the significant amount of diplomatic, military and economic investment to transform CCAP into practice. Moreover, there is much talk in India about the geostrategic importance of central Asia as a geostrategic space for India, yet India is not present among dominant players in the Central Asia States. Laruelle and Peyrouse noted that, "talk of the priority, New- Delhi gives to Central Asia and efforts to cut a major figure, these are more aspirational than actual and its discursive activity by far exceeds the reality of bilateral relationships."(Campbell, 2013, p. 10).

Central Asia is important geo-economically as well as geo-politically for India. India has both opportunities and challenges to reach CARs. Being the hub of huge hydrocarbon resources the region can secure India's increasing energy demand in long run and can reduce the India's over dependence for the energy resources over the unstable Middle East. For India, importance of Central Asia lies in its historical and civilisational links. Devandra Kaushak noted that, "few regions of the world can claim such uninterrupted multifaceted ties going back to antiquity as India and Central Asia."(Kaushak, 1998, p. 231).K. Warikoo notes that, "today, which (Central Asia) lies as a bridge between Asia and Europe, rich in natural resources and the shortest transit

route to Europe, is geopolitically axial and offers a lot of economic opportunities."(Warikoo, 2011, p. 223). From the Indian perspective, the importance of Central Asian region needs to be seen in a context of energy needs. In addition to oil and gas, Central Asia has uranium reserves. Securing assured energy supply is crucial for the continuum of India's economic growth and development. India presently imports most of its oil consumption. A major portion of it is imported from the unstable middle east region. Therefore, energy security is a vital element of India's national interest and foreign policy. Ivan Campbell notes that, "with India projected to become ever more reliant on imported energy, reducing dependence on the middle east and cultivating alternative sources of energy has become a vital concern. Central Asia contains vast hydrocarbon fields both onshore and offshore in the Caspian Sea." (Campbell, 2013, p. 3). CARs are rich in hydrocarbon resources like oil and natural gas. Most of this is found in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. As per UNESCO Science Report, "Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have abundant natural gas reserves and Uzbekistan's own reserves make it more or less self-sufficient…Kazakhstan has the world's largest uranium reserves." (UNESCO Report, 2016, p. 365). So, the region could be tapped as a source of uranium for India's civilian nuclear program, which would in the long-run help diversify its energy base.(Campbell, 2013). This reflects importance of the Central Asia region for India's energy security policy.

India is projected to proceed growing at a robust pace by International Monetary Fund (IMF). India's demand for oil is anticipated to increase from 122 million tons in 2001-02 to 196 million tons in 2011-12 to 364 million tons in 2024-2025. The domestic production during this period is expected to increase from 26 million tons in 2001-02 to 80 million tons in 2024-25. A per International Energy Agency (IEA) report, "India is projected to experience the largest increase in oil demand of any country in the world-6 million barrels per day (mb/day), followed by China 5 mb/day." (World Energy Outlook, 2015. p. 63). The reason for this is as the GDP of India is expected to grow at an annual rate of 6.5% over the future 25 years (World Energy Outlook, 2015, p. 37). Gross Domestic Product refers to the final value of all goods and services produced in a financial year and are broadly assumed as size of any economy. The rapid growth of gross domestic product will enable India to become a crucial driver for energy consumption over the long term. Besides, India has negligible oil reserves as compared to the global

oil reserves. Thus, India has to heavily rely on imports of oil due to huge gap between the domestic production and the consumption level in country. Hence, India is expected to contribute a ample share of the oil imports in the future, which indirectly makes it an crucial factor for crude oil demand. Lastly, according to IEA, a majority of India's oil demand growth is expected to be driven by the transportation sector. Currently, the vehicle ownership is significantly lower compared to the developed countries, such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom, as well as emerging countries, such as Brazil. Hence, India's growing economy will augment growth in the transportation sector, which will consequently, boost its demand for oil in the long term (India Energy Outlook, 2015, p. 12). Thus, India's demand for oil will increase due to number of reasons such as fast growth in the country's Gross Domestic Product, low level of per capita energy consumption and deficiency of reserves.

In the similar fashion, the requirements of the gas situation are grim in India. As per IEA report, in the New Policy Scenario, the production of natural gas show positive trend by increasing from 35bcm in 2013 to about 90 bcm in 2040. But at the end creates deficiency of 80 bcm that needs to be fulfilled or meet by imports. (World Energy Outlook, 2015, p.527). This deficiency can be tackled met by exploring the gas potential in general in Central Asia and particularly in Turkmenistan. The exploration of gas in Central Asia will not only enable India to meet its short term increasing demand for gas but will prove as a long-term destination for overcoming the India's growing demands for gas and other energy requirements. This mandated India's multifaceted engagement with the energy producing countries particularly the Central Asia as being the part of India's extended neighbourhood. Furthermore, India should engage with the foreign energy producing and transporting companies, particularly in the Central Asia. This can make possible for India to harness gas interest in the Central Asia region.

There are several challenges in the way to develop relations with the region including the unstable neighbourhood like Afghanistan and hostility with Pakistan which infringes the cheap route to the Central Asian region through Pakistan. India already took various initiatives for the development of Afghanistan but still is unable to motivate Pakistan for the same. And on and again relation between the two bitters. Keeping in mind the fragile relations with Pakistan India already has sorted out the route to connect via Chabahar port through Iran but it would have been less costly if it passes through Pakistan. There is yet another

route to connect Central Asia that is via ancient silk route that passes through Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir) via China to Central Asia. The alternative connection to reach Central Asia through Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir).Ladakh has an important geo-strategic location. Ladakh borders are adjacent to Baltistan/Skardu in Pak Adminstered Kashmir to the west, Tibet region and Xingjiang regions of China to its east and north. Ladakh historically and culturally plays an important role being close proximity to Central Asia. K. Warikoo noted that, "Ladakh enjoyed a central position in the network of overland caravan routes that linked to Silk Route. Ladakh acted as an important gateway in the Central Asian exchange of materials, men, and ideas through the ages." (Warikoo, 2011, p. 245). The internal disturbance and communist takeover of Xinjiang region in the 1930s and 1949 respectively deprived Ladakh and Kashmir of their prominent link and the central position of Indo-Central Asian trade that passed through a network of caravan trails criss-crossing Ladakh and Kashmir. (Warikoo, 2011, pp. 245-46). But still, this route has not been taken into consideration by the government. If India can develop this route it would have a demonstration effect on the development of the less developed region-Ladakh as well as the economically cheaper route to reach Central Asia.

Conclusion

India's foreign policy is based on non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs and sovereignty of any nation. India is not in any competition with anyone in Central Asia but is in a continuous effort to pursue its national interests both economic and strategic. India's past foreign policy record of Non Alignment Movement (NAM) and Panchshell makes India favourite to the CARs and India can have great influence over the region. India needs to play its cards well enough through its bilateral relations with each of Central Asian republics. This is possible through engaging with Central Asian Republics and develops cordial and cooperative relations with them. By this, reinforced by India as a trustful partner, despite the strong Chinese influence in the region, India will be able to accomplish the goals of its foreign policy in future in CARs. No doubt, India can revive the old routes to connect the 'Old Silk Route' but these links are presently hostage to difficult political relations of India with Pakistan and China as well as the unstable conditions in Afghanistan. But, the prospects of India using these old corridors are more in the long run. India has presently started

to be active in International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chabahar port to access to Afghanistan and Central Asian Region. Moreover, recent membership in Shanghai Cooperation Organization will help India's renewed linkages to the Central Asian region. Finally, Connect Central Asia Policy (CCAP) of India will enable India to not only increase its presence in the Central Asian region but will also help in pushing its energy agenda in the region effectively. However, the challenge is to bring the policy into practice effectively.

India has realized the practical difficulties to connecting Central Asia. India needs to pursue its CCAP effectively, irrespective of its unimpressive gains till recently, to achieve success in connecting the Central Asian region and tap up energy potential of the Central Asian Republics. The CCAP can further prove an effective tool for India to reach and have influence in the Central Asian region. India along with Pakistan recently became the members of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. This can prove helpful for India's renewed linkages with the Central Asian region. Moreover, it can enable India to take help of the RATs-SCO (The anti-terrorist wing of SCO) to counter the terrorism in India. SCO is an excellent example of confidence building among neighbours through confidence building among neighbours through a settlement of borders. The SCO's process of stabilization of Afghanistan would serve India's interest. SCO can also provide a useful forum to engage China and Pakistan on the issue of regional security. The close cooperation among the present members of SCO can also be helpful in fighting against international terrorism. India's membership in Shanghai Cooperation Organization will enable Indian leaders to communicate with the leaders of the Central Asian states every year. That India lacked before. This can bring the two regions, even more, closer and help in strengthening bilateral relations. Central Asia being in the close proximity to India is not only important from the economic point of view but also strategically. Any disturbance in the region can have a direct effect on India. Therefore the region cannot be neglect by India. Keeping in mind the resource potential of the region and the regions strategic significance for India, India needs the robust foreign policy to deal with the obstruction and the impediments in the way to reach central Asia. Further, the requirement is to revive the old silk route via Ladakh to reach Central Asia.

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India and Tajikistan
Contours of Emerging Relations

Tabasum Firdous

Abstract

The bilateral relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan have developed considerably owing to both nations' cooperation on security and strategic issues. There is today mutual respect, trust and confidence. Many important milestones have been crossed and at each stage a total understanding and convergence of views are evident on all issues of mutual concern. The common views of political leaders of both countries about important issues of International Relations are firm points for enhancing bilateral relations in various fields such as, economy, commerce, politics, science and culture.

Tajikistan was lost in the larger picture of the Central Asia region, which seemed to be perceived as being Uzbek centric. However, India's perception of Tajikistan underwent a qualitative change after the Taliban took over Kabul in September 1996 and is now central to India's strategic interests in the region. As the region has good potential in hydroelectricity generation, power transport, and full chain of cotton processing. There are more future possibilities of developing bilateral relations between the two countries. India and Tajikistan will work closely on developing trade and transport links through Chabar Port in Iran. The paper is a humble attempt to discuss different dimensions of Indo-Tajik Relations.

Keywords

Tajikistan, Foreign Policy, Defense Strategy, Terrorism, Indo-Tajik Relations, Central Asia.

Prefatory (Historical Context)

Among Central Asian Republics, Tajikistan which borders Pakistan, Afghanistan and China has been close ally of India. The relation between the two countries from traditional times had been close and cordial. Both the powers are diplomatically connected always. The two powers show their mutual concern towards each other through various bilateral consecutive mechanisms as foreign office consultations, joint working group on counter terrorism and joint commission on trade, economic and scientific cooperation.

India's relations with Tajikistan have been recorded in the Buddhist annals which means around 2500 years BC. The excavations in Panjikent in modern Tajikistan are dependable record in this connection.

The Zoroastrian temples and Buddhist *viharas* all now converted to *mosques* and *madrasahs* in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan speak of ancient relations with India.

In medieval times, two streams of relations were notable. One is the flow of Buddhist missionaries from India to Central Asia via Tajikistan and the second is the trade and commerce carried along these links. New chapter of Indo-Tajikistan relations opened with the ascendency of Mughal emperors in India. Rising from Fergana, Babur crossed the Khyber and descended on India. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi and established Mughal rule in 1524 AD which lasted for almost three decades.

Mughal period is the golden age of Indo-Tajik/Central Asian relations. Babar gave prominence to Tur-Tajik generals rather than Iranian generals. The former, however, could not find closeness with the Emperor. Central Asian Sufi ideas, language (Farsi/Tajik) literature (Farsi in particular) became popular in India.

Central Asian architectural designs became very common in India and we have the masterpieces in *Taj Mahal, Jamia Masjid, Homayon Tomb, Qutab Minar, Agra Fort* and so many other architectural monuments. That is why the Tajiks call India the repository of their civilizational fund. Indo-Tajik Sufi connection and exchange of philosophical visits is the golden chapter of this history.

With the exit of Mughal rule and occupation of India by the British colonial power around the end of 18th century severed India's relations with the Central Asian and Iranian regions. Their bilateral relations were frozen under the colonial diktat and that was a sad period of a couple of centuries.

Post Indian Independence Period

India began reviving her age-old relations with her immediate neighbors that included the Soviet Union and its Central Asian Republics (Ahmad, Panda, and Sing, 2012, p.316). However, under Soviet system, it was possible to revive and consolidate relations only through Moscow. India had many irons in fire and obsessed with security issues, she remained confined to Moscow only paying little rather no attention to the CARs except Uzbekistan where she had a mall cultural unit. Nevertheless, official visits of dignitaries were undertaken, and the beginning was made. Relations between India and Tajikistan have traditionally been close and cordial.

The long history of deep cultural relations between the two regions following the establishment of Mughal Empire of India remains a permanent feature of common relationship. Cultural impulses passed to and fro and manifested visibly in the ecstatic Central Asian response to the Indian films, and the magic they wove on the popular psyche there .The music and the stars of these films took as it were, India into the Central Asian hearts and homes Visits by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1955, Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1966 and Indra Gandhi in the years following - always made it a point to visit some of these Republics to be affectionately greeted by rousing popular receptions (Madan, 1997, p.252). However, after India attained freedom and became a sovereign state, a big change took place in geo-strategies in the region. Although World War II had come to an end, but the era of Cold War set in. The world was divided into two blocs, one led by the Americans and the other by the Russians (Nehru, 1949, p.300). Indian Government pursued the policy of Non-Alignment towards Global powers (Palmer and Perkins, 2007, p.720). Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, an admirer of the socialist experiment, had welcomed the Central Asian representatives to the first Asian Relations Conference held in Delhi in March- April 1947 as delegates from the Soviet Republics of Asia. He said about these republics " ……*which have advanced so rapidly in our generation and which have so many lessons to teach us Wherever I have gone in the Soviet Union I have found a passion for peace. In India we have been devoted to the cause of peace, and even in our struggle we have endeavored to pursue methods of peace. For our own progress as well as far causes that are dear to us, peace is essential*" (Nehru, 1949, p.300). Again the Soviet Central Asian republics were adequately represented in the second Asian Relations Conference held in Delhi when Rajiv Gandhi was the prime minister. Formal relations between India and the Soviet Union were established when India became independent in 1947. However, that did not mean that India had established direct relations with the Central Asian Republics. Given the Soviet system of administration and its parameters of foreign policy, direct approaches to the Central Asian states were out of question. It depended on to what extent Moscow was prepared to allow interaction with these Republics. India's relations with the Soviet Union have traditionally been dominated by its security needs. Apart from ideological compatibility, US military aid to Pakistan in the mid-fifties played an important role in the establishment of close friendly relations between New Delhi and Moscow. This meant that

as Pakistan secured diplomatic support from the United States on the Kashmir issue, India secured diplomatic support from the other super power, the Soviet Union (Budhraj, 1979, p.361).

The dismantling of the Soviet Union in 1991 and end of Cold War, as is well known, induced disquieting changes in the world. Importantly, 15 new Sovereign Republics emerge from the former Soviet Union. Amongst these are 5 Republics- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan- all landlocked and lucidly known as Central Asia. Of relevance is the fact that all the five Republics are in India's neighborhood or the extended neighborhood or the near abroad. Accordingly, in the changed situation, it was no surprise that India's close relations and cooperation with the Soviet Union was indeed an advantage and the foreign policy needed a simple shift in focus, from the larger canvas of the Soviet Union to a smaller canvas of renewing and building close relations with each of the new Republics. In Central Asia or the near abroad or the extended neighborhood, the agenda was to establish special relations with each of the five Republics. India's advantage is the geographical proximity, the historical, cultural and the civilizational links. Therefore, renewing and re-establishing links with the region was not hard or tricky. As a result, Prime Minister Narashima Rao took the pragmatic action to establish diplomatic relations with the new Republics of the former Soviet Union, give a special focus to Central Asia and invite their leaders to visit India. Given this pragmatism, Prime Minister Narashima Rao also paid reciprocal visits to meet and interact with all the leaders of Central Asia.

Tajikistan's Special Significance

India has a special reason to evolve a significant policy towards the Central Asian Republic of Tajikistan. A few features stand out. Tajiks are ethnically from the Indo-Iranian branch of the Aryans. Their mother tongue – Tajik – is a branch of Irano-Aryan group of languages and hence drawing extensively from Sanskrit. Tajiks have contributed strongly to the evolution of India's composite culture. The catalyst to that was the *Turanian* segment at the court of the Imperial Mughals of Delhi. Farsi/Tajik poetry and prose produced during the Mughal period bears a strong impression of Tajik culture and way of life. Despite being a home to Sunni-Hanafi Muslims, Tajiks have always loved and contributed to the religious tolerance and behaved in truly secular fashion. India's democratic and secular political system is what the Tajiks want to emulate and establish as the future frame of Tajik

civil society. Tajikistan from East to West stretches for 700 kilometers and North to South it is 350 kilometers with an area of 1,43,000 square kilometers [a little larger than the Indian states of Tamilnad and Tripura combined] (Nuri,1997; p.268).

The border with China stretches for 414 kilometers, Afghanistan 1206 kilometers, Uzbekistan 1161 kilometers and Kyrgyzstan 870 kilometers- a total perimeter of 3651 kilometers. In the Southeast, Tajikistan is separated from the Indian sub-continent by the Wakhan Corridor [Afghanistan] which is 200 kilometers long and varying from 16 to 65 kilometers in width.

Tajikistan is rich in water resources and has the potential to export hydroelectric energy. It is quite rich in mineral resources as well though hitherto unexploited. Moreover, it is cotton - growing republic. According to Prof. Asimov, Tajikistan, like other CARs, is severely disrupted by the trauma of disintegration of the former Soviet Union. It is in dire need of aid from all available quarters in order to develop and come out of the deep recession travail. It needs help from countries like India in developing its textile industry (Nuri, 1997; p.268).

Tajikistan's population liberally estimated is around seven million and it has natural resources that could make it one of the very rich countries in the world, if not, in Asia. The population is small and young. It has the largest natural water resources in the region and the second largest in the former Soviet Union and is only second to Russia. More than 65% of the glaciers in the region are in Tajikistan and together with Kyrgyzstan they control over 90% of the water resources of Central Asia. Other than the extensive water resources, it has large reserves of mercury, brown coal, lead, zinc, antimony and tungsten, silver, gold and an unknown quantity and unpublicized uranium deposits. Unlike in the other four Republics, exploitation of Tajikistan's modest fossil fuel and natural gas resources are currently not economically viable.

The maximum flying time between Dushanbe and Delhi is less than two hours and is about the same flying time between Delhi and Hyderabad or Delhi and Mumbai. Other than the geographic proximity to India, the geo-strategic location of Tajikistan is most relevant (Larurelle, 2012, p.16). Historically, India was closer to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan than to the three other states in the region. However, the Tajik civil war between 1992 and 1997, and more generally the intrinsic poverty of Tajikistan, reduced Delhi's prospects in the country.

Tajikistan's Foreign Policy

In any dialogue on India-Tajikistan bilateral relations, it is important to be familiar with Tajikistan's foreign policy as a background to India's relations with Tajikistan.

Tajikistan's foreign policy is determined by its geo-strategic position and other factors, that is, development of mutual benefit of equal rights and contacts with all states, contribute towards the strengthening of world peace and international security. To this end Tajikistan is a signatory to most international treaties, protocols, conventions etc., and a member of most international and regional organizations. Tajikistan is an active member of the United Nations, Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS], Central Asian Economic Alliance [CAEA], Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia [CICA], Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO], Shanghai Cooperation Organization [SCO], Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC], International Monetary Fund [IMF], World Bank, the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], the Asian Development Bank [ADB], Islamic Development Bank [IDB] and is also a participant in NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and in the Partnership for Peace Program. The list is not complete but is indicative of Tajikistan's aspirations.

Strategic-Cooperation

The appearance of the Taliban in September 1994 presented an alarming dimension to religious extremism and terrorism in the region and with it the need for India to seek cooperation in strategic areas with all friendly countries in the region. Tajikistan on the other hand was in turmoil and in a civil war situation. In this given situation the Government of India, notwithstanding the international tirade against the leadership of President *Rahmanov,* was in empathy with *Rahmanov's* very determined efforts to bring peace and stability to Tajikistan. India's position was indeed very Nehruvian in not condemning the leadership of Tajikistan but to sincerely help the country overcome its genuine difficulties and to strengthen the process of peace and stability. Significantly, Tajikistan today is the only Republic in the region that has opposition political parties with an opposing political view participating in the political system. This vindicated the full support India extended to President *Rahmanov.*

For Tajikistan to fully emerge out of the civil war situation internal stability is very essential and this is being made possible only by

allowing an opposing political view to co-exist with the politics of the country's leadership. Most importantly, the external factor central to the overall stability of Tajikistan is the stability of Afghanistan while Tajikistan is central to stability in Central Asia. Thus, this fact is well acknowledged by strategists in the region and in India.

Tajikistan is emerging a very important country of Central Asia with which India seems to be widening the scope of relationship. The situation and location of Tajikistan are the factors to which India needs to attach much importance. Situated on the northern borders of the trouble -torn Afghanistan, it was clear that the fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan in their movement towards the north would try to set their foot on the contiguous territories of Tajikistan. If fundamentalists secured a foothold in this militarily weak Central Asian state, it might lead to destabilization of the whole of Central Asia. A trouble- torn Central Asia would never make situation comfortable for India. With Taliban outfits operating in Tajikistan and finally attempting to join hands with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, India would lose a strong support to her secular democratic dispensation in the region. Therefore, Tajikistan began to assume importance in India's geo-political strategy.

Without going into details, India's problems with cross border terrorism has its roots not only across the border but also in Afghanistan. Thus, stability in Afghanistan is also vital for India. To this end, India's strategic cooperation with Tajikistan is indispensable. Exit of NATO forces from Afghanistan may also exacerbate the security situation in Afghanistan, and emergence of Taliban poses a strong threat to both the countries. Therefore, there is lot of scope between the two countries to work together and secure their national and security interests. India cannot ignore the strategic importance of Tajikistan. In November 2003, Indian Prime Minister paid an official visit to Dushanbe. Tajikistan was the second leg of Vajpayee's three-nation trip, which included Russia and Syria. In Dushanbe, a Joint Working Group was established with Tajikistan to combat international terror. Eight treaties have been signed at the conclusion of the summit meeting, which include the agreement to intensify their defense cooperation and to build a highway linking them through Afghanistan and Chabahar port in Iran with the warm waters of the Persian Gulf.

Indo-Tajik relations assume significance essentially owing to three reasons. Firstly, the highway from Chabahar through Afghanistan to Tajikistan (Chabahar-Kabul-Kunduz-Badakhshan) will enable India to

have a transport corridor to the otherwise inaccessible Central Asian Republics. The highway starts from Chabahar, an Iranian port that is being developed. It is close to the Pakistani port at Gawadar being built with Chinese help. This is also seen as a counter-strategy by India to limit Chinese influence in the Pakistani waters close to India and Iran. Secondly, engagements with Tajikistan will help India to strengthen its presence in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Thirdly, engaging Tajikistan in military collaboration will give added strength to the India's security interests at home and in Central Asia. Tajikistan is the "lynchpin" of India's CCAP because of its strategic location. Its borders are with Afghanistan, China, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and it is located in close proximity to Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Delhi and Dushanbe have shared concerns on terrorism and drug trafficking (Das, 2012).

In terms of geography, Tajikistan is her nearest state of Central Asia. In view of Pakistan's search for "strategic depth" westward and northward, India has been seriously thinking of learning some lesson from the situation that developed in the Panjsheer Valley when Ahmad Shah Masud was locked in a grim battle with the Taliban. At that time, India had been reportedly making small war supplies to the forces of Northern Alliance. In the light of that experience and in order to benefit from the ouster of Taliban in Afghanistan, which has scuttled Pakistan's lurking ambition, Indian policy planners made some serious decisions. Indian Defense Ministry's Military Engineering Services has built a runway at an air base called Ainy situated in northeast of Dushanbe. This is India's first ever defense installation in Central Asian Republics. Obviously, this installation could not have come into being without the consent of the Russians and the Americans both of whom are claiming to be the policemen overlooking the activities of the terrorists in this weak Central Asian state. This is just another signal that India is attaching great importance to Central Asia. India is an energy-starved country. But apart from economic objectives, India has also taken into account the strategic element in her Central Asian policy. A military base has been established in Tajikistan. Military and diplomatic sources in New Delhi said that the base, with a handful of defense "advisers" at Farkhor, close to the Afghan border, has been "quietly operational" since May 2003 and that it is the first such Indian military facility outside the country. (Baruah, 2003) India's military presence in Tajikistan, be it in Ayni or in Farkhor, would give India the much-needed depth and range in tackling Pakistan's threats to its interest in Afghanistan. It would also

prove to be a geo-strategic game-changer and give a larger role in South Asia.

Indian P.M. announced that India would also extend assistance for the "infra-structural requirements" of the military training college in Dushembe. "We are cooperating well in the field of defense training. We have agreed to institutionalize contact between our armed forces in specialized areas. Said the Prime Minister."

Tajikistan has a small army around 47,000 army personnel, and an air force with 19,000 personnel, one of the largest in the region. It flies around 190 fighter aircraft such as MiG 21s, MiG 27s, MiG 29s and Sukhoi 24s, nearly all of which are operated by the Indian Air Force (IAF). But its pilot efficiency has suffered grievously over the past eight years because of under-staffing of its combat squadrons mainly owing to poor training facilities (Baruah, 2003) Obviously, India's growing presence, especially military presence, in Tajikistan or for that matter any other state in the Central Asian region would not be seen with favour by Pakistan, her arch - rival. The fear of growing Indian links with Kabul and the CAR led Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf to warn New Delhi to "lay off" the region in a televised address to the nation after the United States-led war on Afghanistan began in October 2003 (Bedi, 2002).

India has significantly reinforced its influence in CA following the 2002 collapse of Afghanistan's Islamist Taliban regime, which was brought down by a US-led coalition. The Tajik leader said in Nov. 2003 that New Delhi was a "strategic partner " for the Central Asian republic and the two countries shared a common stance on fighting, terrorism, drug-trafficking and extremism,". Vajpayee told journalists in Dushanbe after the talks, "Tajikistan and India have been fighting against terrorism for a long time and they are members of the International – anti-terrorist coalition" (Luthra, 2005). India's recent diplomatic thrust into Central Asia keeping in view its future energy requirements and strategic positioning, through bilateral visits and trade and understated military agreements with some of the Republics, is also triggered by the security realignments in the region following the Taliban's ouster. "The ensuing conflict of interest in the area between India's old ally Russia and the U.S., its new found "long-term, strategic partner," and nuclear rival China is also fuelling Delhi's "forward" Central Asian policy (Baruah, 2003).

Defense Cooperation

Tajikistan's Defense Minister, Colonel General Sherali Khairullaev visited India for the first time in December 2001. This visit resulted in the two sides defining the scope and areas of cooperation. The visit was reciprocated by India's Defense Minister, George Fernandes, in April 2002 and this visit gave more body and content to the cooperation. Since April 2002-2017 there have been several delegation visits from both sides of which eight went from India. In short, the instruments for bilateral cooperation and India's assistance program are in place.

The bilateral defense cooperation covers a wide spectrum of bilateral interests and includes notably, sharing of information, material support and joint exercise. Of significance to Tajikistan is India's assistance program on training defense officers, human resource development, English language training, establishment of English language centre, IT centre and the rehabilitation of the military airfield at Ayni, near Dushanbe. India would also extend assistance to Tajikistan to raise and build an effective air force. The Ayni facility thus is the first home to Tajikistan's infant air force.

In addition, India has gifted military liveries for two brigades, aviation suits, computers, language training material, military jeeps and trucks and two Mi-8 helicopters along with spare parts and consumables. As a component of officers training, batches of young military cadets from Tajikistan are undergoing training at the National Defense Academy [NDA] at Khadakwasla. In addition to this training program, Tajik officers will attend the Young Officers Course. Besides these, the Tajik Ministry of Defense will receive a grant of US$ 0.5 million to renovate and upgrade the Tajik Military Institute. Importantly, India is committed to the upgradation of the defense infrastructure and markedly, the defense cooperation includes making available experts and training of experts to handle strategic material or substance.

Conclusion

India as a rising economic power in South Asia and pursuing the democratic dispensation at home is bound to make deep in roads into the Central Asian States in times to come. The Indian strategy is to make her presence felt in Central Asia as a player in the regional strategy. She also wants the extremist organizations in the region to be denied any chance of radicalizing Central Asian Society. Her presence would add to the process of balancing of power in the region where all the major powers - the US, Russia, China would be meeting. India seems to have

learnt the lesson from the rise and fall of Taliban that she cannot afford to remain complacent with the situation in Central Asia keeping in mind the proximity of the region to her borders in Kashmir. With reference to Tajikistan, India's interests are hinged on economic, strategic, historical, cultural, civilizational and geographical link. Furthermore, it is vital for India that Tajikistan remains stable, secular and friendly. Given Tajikistan's constitution and the multi-party political system, her credentials as a secular state, pose no doubts. Of noteworthy is that Tajikistan is also an emerging democracy in the region as it is the only country that has a legitimate space for opposition political parties with opposing political views vis-à-vis the ruling regime and the ruling party. The space for the opposition political views to co-exist with the politics of the ruling regime gives a strong base for democracy and political stability to take root. However, external factors like instability in Afghanistan and the re-emergence of the Taliban do pose a threat to secularism, political stability and democratic principles in Tajikistan. Instability in Afghanistan or Tajikistan has its repercussions in the two countries. Therefore, India must take cognizance of these facts in its agenda for strategic cooperation with Tajikistan.

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India in the Regional Competition for Kazakh Energy Resources

Harmeet Singh

Abstract

The Central Asian Republics have drawn the world's attention, primarily for the reason of their expected abundance of their energy resources. The Geo-strategic location of Central Asia is as such, it lies between Europe and Asia. In the post cold war era the Great Game revisited in Kazakhstan with a competition between regional and world powers for gaining profits, influence, hegemony and maintaining power. The political and commercial competition emerged among the great powers in order to make hold over the vast energy reserves of these newly independent states of Central Asia and the concepts like Heartland, Great game, Grand Chess Board and Clash of Civilizations gained importance. A new chapter opened in the contest among the international players for control of these oil and gas deposits.In the post cold war era India was among the first countries which recognized these Central Asian republics, supports them for their reconstruction. India opened its embassies in these countries and the leaders of these countries like; Uzbek president Islam Karimov and Kazakh president Nursultan Nazarbayev made India as the destination for their first official trip abroad after independence.

Keywords

Energy resources, Geostrategic location, Great Game, Energy Competition, Central Asian Republics, Heartland.

Great Game Revisited

Kazakhstan is the largest and significant country among the Central Asian Republics, Owing to the fact that this country possesses huge reserves of oil, natural gas and uranium. The vast potential of wealth is coupled with a unique geopolitical position of Kazakhstan; it has long borders with Russia and China as well as three of the other Central Asian Republics and with Caspian Sea. This geographical make up erect this country as the Centre most regional power in the International relations. At one time there was a power rivalry in this region between Soviet Russia and British, the noted novelist Rudyard Kipling calls this Century long Rivalry as "The Great Game"[1]. Today Kazakhstan is

1 The term great game is usually associated with power rivalry between British Empire and the Russian Empire for maintaining their supremacy over the Central Asian Region. This phrase great game is usually associated with Arthur

manifested with this Great Game and this time there are multiple players involved with almost identical motives but competing strategies. The major players involved are USA, Russia, China, Turkey and Iran. All these powers are competing for making hold over the Kazakh energy reserves, and all the external powers wants to control these energy reserves politically as well as economically. In this way, in the second decade of the 21st century the great game revisited in Kazakhstan with multiple players.

Kazakhstan occupies a leading position in the Central Asian region, with the rapid rise in literacy, industrialization, and urbanization. It emerges as the rising economic power in the region having major space launching centre at Baikonur[2]. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Kazakhstan was reeling under economic crisis. Later on it occupied its place in the international community with its fast growing economic appetite. Kazakhstan is the second largest oil producing country among the former Soviet Republics. In the year 2002, Kazkhstan produced 1 million barrels of oil per day. The proven hydrocarbon reserves of Kazakhstan both onshore and offshore are estimated to be around 30-50 billion barrels. These proven hydrocarbon reserves are basically from the Tengiz and Karachaganak (Akiner, 2004:3-12).

In Post 9/11 attack USA launched GWOT (Global War on Terror) program against Al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. After launching this program USA became a major player in this region. USA wants to weed out terrorism from this region, under the shadow of "Operation Enduring Freedom"[3]. Washington nurtured a hidden motive from the very beginning i.e. to make hold over the energy resources of this region. Thus, the importance of this region increased tremendously in political as well as economic spheres. The basic objective of USA is too dealt with religious fundamentalism and to bring political stability in this region. In order to uphold this aim USA helped in the

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Conolly, a British east India Company officer. But later on it was introduced and popularised by British Novelist Rudyard Kipling in his Novel Kim which published in the year 1901.

2 Baikonur Cosmodrome is the world's largest space launching station which is located in Kazakhstan. It is leased by the Kazakh government to Russia until 2050. It is managed jointly by the Russian Federal Space and the Russian Aerospace Defence Forces.

3 Operation Enduring Freedom is the official name of the operation which the US government launched against the Al-Qaeda operating Taliban network in Afghanistan and nearby regions. This operation together with small military operations comes under the umbrella of GWOT (Global War on Terrorism) launched on 7 October 2001.

promotion of democracy and USwants to maintain a sizeable military presence in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Besides this U.S wants to promote free markets, democratization, and the forging of East-West and Central Asia and South Asia trade linkages. Whereas, the main aim of USA in Kazakhstan is to secure and eliminate the Soviet-era nuclear and biological weapon material. At present USA energy firms have invested in oil and natural gas developments in Kazakhstan. USA wants to maintain good and friendly relations with Kazakhstan since from its independence. In the year 1993, USA signed an agreement with Kazakhstan for dismantling of the nuclear warheads, for this USA provides compensation to Kazakhstan and purchased the remaining uranium (Eheshami, 2004: 63)

Russia is also a dominant player in Kazakhstan for exploiting the Kazakh energy reserves; Russia is importing oil through the Atyrau-Samara pipeline, which is having the crude capacity of 310,000 barrels per day. The geographical and the economic ties of Russia continue to make Russia as the key player in the Kazakh foreign policy. One of the major reasons for the Russian continuous engagement is the large chunk of the Russian ethnic population residing in Kazakhstan. One of the big developments in the Russian exploitation is the construction of CPC (Caspian Pipeline Consortium) which was fully operational in the year 2002. This pipeline directly brings oil from the Tengiz field to Novorossiysk in the Russian Black Sea coast. Kazakhstan is also having gas reserves of 65 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and most of these gas reserves are situated in the extension area of the Russian Orenberg region, Iran and Kazakhstan both are also doing oil swaps and it was started in the year 1996, later on it was suspended because there was a high level of sulfur content in Kazakh oil. It was restarted in the year 2002, and in the year 2004 Iran imported around 2,00,000 billion barrel of oil per day from Kazakhstan.

The third major regional player for Kazakh energy resources is China, as the Chinese economy is growing at a faster pace and there is a steep hike in the demand for energy resources in China and China is facing a huge energy deficit. For sustaining the continuous growth and fulfillment of its domestic energy demands the importance of Kazakhstan for China increased tremendously. Kazakhstan is an energy resource rich country lies on the western margin of China. The Chinese demand for oil is expected to be more than double by 2030, in this state of affairs, China wants to diversify its energy base and Kazakhstan is seen as the best alternative for the growing Chinese economy. In

the post Soviet period China become the second major player in Kazakhstanboth these countries are sharing a common physical border of 1700 km Chinese engagement in Kazakhstan can be strategically viewed from the two main viewpoints:

1. The rising energy demands of China at the domestic level and for the continuous supply of oil, Uranium and gas.
2. There is a problem of suppression and the secession movement by the Uyghur ethnic group. This ethnic minority lies in the western province of China (Xinxiang). Kazakhstan is having close ethnic and economic ties with the Uyghur's of Xinxiang. So in order to restore peace and stability in Xinxiang, Chinese involvement in Kazakhstan increased (Jafar, 2004: 204).

In the year 1997 China invested billions of dollars in the Uzen oil fields in Kazakhstan. China is laying oil and gas pipelines carrying the length of 13,500 km which will run from Russia, Central Asia and China (USEIA, 2014). In Xinxiang there is a Muslim population mostly Uyghur's which comprised the 60% of the population of Xinxiang. This group is one of the dominant groups in the Chinese territory of Xinxiang. Originally they hails from Turkey and they share cultural, religious and the linguistic heritage with the Central Asian Republics more than China. The Chinese policies in the post 9/11 period targeted particularly this group because China wants to suppress this group in the light of Global war on terrorism. All these power games were interdependent on the web of relations which influenced the "New Great Game in Kazakhstan".

Turkey and Iran were also the part of this "New Great Game" which revisited in Kazakhstan. Turkey has clear economic interests in oil and gas supplies from Central Asia. In addition, the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia have religious interests they are promoting Madrassas and sponsoring religious education through mosques. So in this way with the interference of the external powers, Kazakhstan became a hotbed for power contestation. This emerging pattern of power contestation is because of its rich energy reserves and to the lesser extent by its geostrategic location.

Paradigm Shift in US Policies Towards Kazakhstan

After the Soviet disintegration USA injects its political presence in the Central Asia and Caspian basin. The proliferation of the nuclear Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) in Central Asia and Arab world is one

of the biggest challenges for USA. The biggest problem raised by the Kazakhstan for USA is the acquisition of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan inherited the intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with a total of 1400 warheads. The average target length of these ICBMs is more than 5,000 km. The basic thing which should be noted is that Kazakhstan has become the first ever Muslim state which can strike directly at the heartlands of the West. So in this way Kazakhstan becomes a source of threat for the US policy makers. All these issues were resolved when USA signed the NPT (Non Proliferation Treaty) and agreed to dismantle its nuclear arsenal. In the year 1992 the signing of START-1 (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty), allows the elimination of one third of Soviet and US nuclear arms. This followed the elimination of SS-18s one of the lethal missiles in Kazakhistan.

After the terrorist attacks of 9/11 the USA, established its military presence in the Afghanistan and further established military bases in the Central Asian republics. Basically the geostrategic location of Kazakhstan is as such; it lies in the "Heart of Eurasia" and is endowed with the rich energy resources like oil, natural gas and Uranium. All these factors increased the importance of Kazakhstan tremendously and US is also in search of energy reserves so that it can help in reducing American energy dependence on the West Asia. The other biggest plan of US is to make hold over the Kazakhstan demand for the goods and services. Finally America wants to eliminate terrorism and religious fundamentalism from this region. The only security threat which USA encountered is Islamic fundamentalism and instability. Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are the western surrogates to encounter this threat. The USA's prime political motive is to increase stability and speed up the process of democratization in order to increase the commercial activity and to control the nuclear weapons. During the president Nazarbayev's visit to USA "Democratic Cooperation Agreement" signed which emphasized on promotion of democratic values, human rights and the rule of law. In order to promote the democracy and democratic values USA had taken a keen interest in establishing educational programs on various subjects. These programs include different topics like political party, voter education, public administration, law and legal reforms (Fumuagalli, 2010: 177).

The Denuclearization of Kazakhstan is the sole aim of the USA and Kazakhstan also cooperated in the denuclearization program. The "Lisbon protocol" was signed in the year 1992, aims at denuclearization

of Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine. In the year 1993 there was a joint agreement signed between Kazakhstan and USA, which aims to destruct the Kazakhstan's nuclear weapon arsenal. In the year 1995, Kazakhstan removed its last nuclear warheads and weapons grade material and in the year 2000 successfully completed the seal of 181 nuclear test tunnels. Under the cooperative threat program USA had spent $240mn to assist Kazakhstan in the elimination of WMD's and related infrastructure. In addition, in the year 2008, US "General Electric" signed a memorandum with Kazatomprom on nuclear mining, nuclear power and uranium processing.

Russian Interest in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan and Russia has strong historical, cultural and ethnic linkages. Russia is sharingthe longest border line with Kazakhstan which is estimated to be around 7500 km. Both the countries have historical, geographical and economic ties from the Soviet period. Kazakhstan is having a large ethnic Russian population, which is one of the potential factors for close ties between the countries. After the Soviet disintegration, in the initial years the Russian response towards the newly independent states is not up to the mark. But later on, Russia showed its keen interest in the Central Asian Republics. Russian and Kazakh relations got strengthening day by day in different spheres, including social, political, economic, cultural and humanitarian. The bilateral cooperation in the areas of oil and gas industry, energy, transport, investment, space and uranium makes a significant progress in the recent years. Russia is Kazakhstan's key trading partner and both the countries having more than 4,000 joint trade ventures. Both sides celebrated the years of excellence. In the year 2003 Kazakhstan celebrated the Russian year, next year in 2004 Russia celebrated as Kazakhstan year. In these years many workshops, round table conferences, were held with the aim of strengthening relations between Astana and Moscow. The delimitation of Kazakhstan and Russian state border is one of the most significant events in the history of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan further established a customs union with Russia and Belarus. This customs union further transformed into the common economic space. In the year 2011, the member states come under a joint commission for deepening of the economic ties which plans to create a Eurasian union by 2015.

The Russian goal in Central Asia revolves around to control the energy resources of the region such as oil, natural gas and uranium, etc.

In order to full fill its goal Moscow wants to maintain regional security in Central Asia. The Russian presence in the Central Asian energy sector has grown rapidly, in the initial years Russian activities were intact only in Kazakhstan. But later on, Russia makes significant strides in other Central Asian countries also. The Russian continuous involvement in the numerous Kazakh energy projects, one such is 'Karachaganak' in Western Kazakhstan , it is one of the richest oil deposit region. The Russian company Rosneft is involved in the construction of the gas refinery in Orenburg. The Kazakh Company KazmunayGaz signed a production sharing agreement with Rosneft for joint exploration and production from the Kurmangazy offshore oilfield. The estimated reserve of KurmanGazy varies from 900 million to 1 billion tons of oil. Rosneft is also the part of Atyrau-Samara pipeline project having a capacity of 15-20 million tons of oil annually. The other pipeline, which is also operational was started during the Soviet period is 'Caspian Pipeline Consortium'. Russia is a 24 % shareholder in the CPC and Kazakhstan is 19 % shareholder. It starts from Tengiz and supply up to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk was a success story of 13 years in the making. Now Russia is planning to increase the capacity of Tengiz- Novorossiysk site from 32 to 67 million tons annually.

Russia has particular interest to develop trade ties with Kazakhstan, which possess the Central Asia's robust economy. In the year 2005 both the economies agreed to create a regional investment bank with an initial capital of $1.5 billion. This bank will open to shareholders from the CIS countries. The Russian companies like Lukoil and Gazprom are the leading trading partners of Kazakhstan which demonstrates the increasing interest of Russia in Kazakh energy. The Russian and Kazakh trade continuously growing touching new heights and now reached $10 billion a year. Both Russia and China are using their soft power as well as hard power in order to boost their influence in the Kazakh economy (Cohen, 2006: 32).

Kazakhstan wants to maintain its closeness with Russia for nuclear fuel cycle and in the long run wants to develop more value added production in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan carried out the initial stages of uranium mining, and then its conversion into the yellow cake happens in the soviet complex. Finally the final product then transferred to Russia for further processing, gasification and enrichment, Kazakhstan and Russia has a joint enrichment facility near Angarsk. Kazakhstan and Russia are also part of the International Uranium Enrichment Centre;

in this centre kazatomprom is holding a 10 % share. Another Russian Kazakh joint collaboration is at Atomniye Stantsii, it is a joint venture of both aimed to design, build and sell small and medium size reactors. Russia's continued and long term interest in Kazakh uranium mining can be seen in joint ventures. In the long term Russia is concerned about the Kazakh nuclear agreements with other countries which tend to decrease the amount of uranium that could be supplied to Russia, and makes Kazakhstan less dependent on Russian nuclear technologies.

Demystifying Chinese Policies for Kazakh Energy Resources

According to the world energy statistics 2013, the Chinese demand for oil is expected to be doubled by the end of 2020. For fulfilling these demands in future China is continuously in search of new and rich energy partners. Kazakhstan is seen as the best alternative for China because it is richly endowed with oil, gas and uranium reserves. The biggest achievement for China is in the year 1997, when the Chinese national oil company CNPC (Chinese national petroleum company) made significant achievements in the oil sector of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan and China share a common physical border having a length of 1740 km. Due to this fact, both the countries are compelled to maintain their relations and cooperate over the host of issues. The biggest compelling factor of cooperation is the increasedChinese demand for the energy, which allures the newly found hydrocarbon reserve state Kazakhstan closer to China.

Another major determinant of Chinese increasing engagement in Kazakhstan is the Uyghur issue. Uyghur's are living in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and they have strong ties for the Uyghur population living in Xinxiang province of China. According to the official estimates Central Asia is a home to more than 3, 00,000 Uyghur population of which 210,000 lives in Kazakhstan, 46,000 in Kyrgyzstan and about 30,000 in Uzbekistan. In order to neutralize the Uyghur's the Chinese government is quiet apprehensive of popular support from Kazakhstan and for that China is using SCO as a platform (Kavalski, 2010: 1-27).

China has established diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan since 1990's. One of the major landmarks in the history of Kazakhstan is the visit of Chinese president Hu Jintao's to Kazakhstan in the year 2003, in this visit several agreements on bilateral cooperation were signed between Kazakhstan and China. On its reciprocal president

Nazarbayev visited to China in December 2006, which led to the signing of cooperation strategy for a 21st century and a plan for co-operation between China and Kazakhstan. Following the signing of bilateral economic cooperation agreements between China and Kazakhstan, the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the two countries is a major achievement. According to one Kazakh newspaper at present Kazakhstan is having more than 105 bilateral agreements and treaties signed between both the countries, of which more than 30 were aimed at regulating trade relations. In the year 2005 CNOOC (Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation) and KazMunayGaz signed an agreement for exploration of the Darkhan offshore exploration which is located between the Kurmangazy and the Karazhambas fields. In addition to Darkhan oil field the Chinese national petroleum corporation is also operating on six other onshore sites. In addition to Darkhan CNPC's main acquisition involved the AktobeMunayGaz Company, in which CNPC purchased a 60% share in 1997 and a further 25 % in the year 2003. CNPC also got a license of 20 years exploitation of the Zhanazhol and Kenkiyak petroleum and gas sites (Qinhua, 2011:96).

The Chinese policies towards Kazakhstanare basically revolving around Kazakh energy resources and to capture the Kazakh energy market. This aim gets a push with the purchasing of a production company, one oil refinery in the south of the Kazakhstan and the construction of the two oil pipelines. The construction of the Atasu-Alashankou oil pipeline from the western Kazakhstan to the western part of China is one of the major achievements for the Chinese companies to quench the Chinese thirst for energy. This pipeline will provide access to Chinese oil companies in the Caspian oil rich region. This pipeline runs from the western part of Kazakhstan to the western part of China (World nuclear organization, 2014). The total length of this pipeline is 962 km and the initial capacity was fixed 10 million tons per year, but later on, it to be increased to 20 million tons of oil per year. This route crosses the Karaganda, East Kazakhstan and Almaty regions. The whole construction of this pipeline is through two separate contracts. Another proposed gas pipeline Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan-China pipeline is a major win- win project for China. According to the viewpoint of Kazakhstan, the Chinese presence in the energy markets is one of the welcome steps because it reduces the Russian domination.

The Chinese gas and oil pipelines are shown in Map.

Source: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/KL17Ag01.html

The importance of the uranium resources of Kazakhstan increased the interest of China. According to the Kazakhstan national agency Kazatomprom the current production is 21,000 tons of uranium. In the year 2001 Kazatomprom and CNNC (China national nuclear corporation) takes forward steps to create a joint venture for the export of Kazakh uranium to China. In the November 2001 both the companies came forward with their first contract for the extraction of uranium, which will remain in force up to 2020. In the year 2005 strategic cooperation agreement was signed between Kazakhstan and China, which advocates the strengthening of ties between the two countries in the atomic energy sector and unification of more industrial segments with enriched uranium production. Another major achievement in the field of atomic energy was the signing of an agreement between Kazatomprom and CGNCP (China Guangdong Nuclear Power Holding) which provides the supply of nuclear fuel by Astana to the Chinese Nuclear power stations. In the September of 2007, both the countries hold cooperative projects for the long term development which envisions Chinese uranium fuel needs to be met by Kazakh uranium reserves. In one of the statements made by the Kazatomprom president, he mentions about the Kazakhstan, as the first country which become a shareholder in China's atomic power industry. Kazatomprom president mentions that Kazakh government will provide yellow cake, fuel pellets and nuclear fuel to China by surpassing the traditional Chinese fuel supplier Areva of France. China is also planning to invest in the two Kazakh uranium producing mines; Irkol and Semizbai. China is also discussing the plans to work together for joint assembly production. In the year 2009 Kazatomprom puts forward its plan of opening of its representative office in Beijing to

foster the cooperative ties. One of the important plans of Russia is to open enrichment facility in China. So in this way Kazakhstan may also have access to enrichment technology through China.

India in the Regional Competition

The Indo- Kazakhstan relations are not new; it dates back to the Great Silk Road which passed from China to the Western world through Kazakhstan. In the post cold war era, India was among the first countries to recognize the independence of Kazakhstan. The first official visit of President Nursultan Nazarbayev to India, which shows the importance of New Delhi to Astana, Kazakhstan and India both have mutual understanding. Kazakhstan is supporting the Indian candidacy for the UN Security Council permanent membership. India is also backing the Kazakhstan's aspiration to become the member of the WTO. The formation of CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia)[4] was first proposed by the President Nazarbayev in the year 1992 on the occasion of the 47th session of UN General Assembly. The CICA is an important Asian initiative to establish peace, stability, security and to prevent mistrust among the countries. India is one of the active members in CICA and a key participant in the interaction and development of cooperation within the forum. The Kazakh side acknowledges and appreciated the Indian contribution in the CICA process. The importance of Kazakhstan for India is because of the close cultural linkages and the natural resources of Kazakhstan could be easily utilized for the mutual benefit of both the countries the six perspective approach of economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and India as pointed out by Kazakh researchers is;

1. Gas and oil branch.
2. Information and Technology sphere.
3. Development of bilateral cooperation in the sphere of small and middle business.
4. Development of trade and economic relations with India.
5. Development of transport gateway- "North-South" from Aktau to the Caspian Sea via Iran till the Arab Sea.
6. Development of tourism (Mazitov, 2009: 161).

4 CICA was established in the year 1999, at present having 26 states, 7 observer states and 4 observer organisations. The idea of CICA first time proposed by the Kazakh president Nazarbayev on 5 October 1992 on the 47th session of United Nations General Assembly. CICA is an Intergovernmental forum for enhancing co-operation, promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

India's strategic vision lies in the development of strong ties with Kazakhstan, India is attempting to frame its Kazakh policy with an integrative framework which covers the divergent approaches. The Indian grand strategic vision ensures the active and purposeful engagement with the major powers and emerging power centers in its extended neighborhood by viewing the concept of neighborhood in terms of widening of concentric circles. Central Asia is seen as the region which comes in the India's extended neighborhood. This strategic vision is articulated by the then Indian foreign secretary Shyam Saran in his November 2006, speech at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies in China. In his speech he asserts that Indian destiny is interlinked with the Asian continent with its footprint goes beyond- East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, South Asia and South East Asia. In this way Indian strategic vision favors the stable, moderate and economically prosperous Central Asian region (Joshi, 2011:10-87).

The second India-Central Asia Dialogue 17-18 June 2013 was a meaningful exercise to help India and Central Asian countries to explore new vistas in various fields for enhancing cooperation. One complete session was devoted to the areas of co-operation between India and Kazakhstan; including peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the situation in Afghanistan, international terrorism and new dimensions to the availability of modern technology. It was proposed in the session that a scientific dialogue between India and Kazakhstan should be initiated and the working groups on specific sectors should be established. In relation to the increasing bilateral economic interaction the following areas were discussed; agriculture, pharmaceutical industry, Information technology, energy and small and medium enterprises. In the end stress was laid on to increase the people to people's contacts, a tool of social mobility this goes beyond Geo-economics and Geo-mobility.

The increased Chinese influence in the Central Asian region has serious implications for Indian energy deals and commerce. The Chinese presence in Central Asia is an established fact and the Chinese involvement in trade, energy deals, pipeline construction, military agreements and in SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) is increasing. In this backdrop, India is acting as a balancer, to combat the increasing Chinese dominance. In Kazakhstan also China is giving tough competition to India in both energy and trade. In this scenario India left with no choice but to expand its political, economic and military capabilities in the Central Asian region. By putting emphasis on the

realist logic it has been suggested that the close Indo-US cooperation in Central Asia is mandatory which will provides check for the increased Chinese involvement in Kazakhstan.

The presence of external players in Kazakhstan after the post cold war era is the matter of concern. The major players involved are USA, Russia, China, Turkey and Iran. All these powers are competing for making hold over the Kazakh energy reserves and for controlling it politically and economically. As the geostrategic location of Kazakhstan is as such, it lies near the energy rich Caspian Sea that has drawn the world attention. In the aftermath of 9/11 all the countries of the world realized that the dependence on Arabian Gulf oil reserves seems more problematic and the new resource rich region Caspian Sea and Kazakhstan is much more suitable to feed their energy demands. In this way, in the second decade of the 21st century the external powers landed in Kazakhstan with multiple players and the dominant among them were China, Russia and USA.

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India's Economic Relations with Afghanistan
A Study in the Context of Trade & Investment

Mohammad Ibrahim Wani
Mohammad Afzal Mir
Kulsuma Akhter

Abstract

Since Afghanistan is strategically crucial for India, a strong and vibrant economic relationship with Afghanistan is, therefore, of critical value and relevance for India. In view of India's relations with its close neighbour Pakistan, Afghanistan attaches further significance for India. Close and stable relations with Afghanistan are possible through sustained and growing trade and investment relations. Afghanistan is blessed with enormous resources and because of its geographical position will become an energy corridor (for TAPI gas pipeline) in the future that would be of considerable importance to India. As a growing and large economy, India needs more energy resources to sustain her high economic growth. In the prevailing scenario, India as the largest and important nation of South Asia, occupying a major expanse of territory with extensive resources and potential, require and sought to increase its commerce and friendship ties with Afghanistan. As a war torn economy, Afghanistan wanted India to establish extensive cooperation in energy, education, agriculture, infrastructure, security, banking, trade and commerce. Besides, Afghanistan is a bridge connecting South Asia with Central Asia, Middle East and beyond. More importantly, the paper has highlighted the bilateral trade potential and modest attempt has made towards in depicting Afghanistan as potential and important country for India in terms of geo-strategic, geo-political and geo-economic factors.

Keywords

India, Afghanistan, Economic Relations, Education, Energy Corridor, South and Central Asia.

Introduction

With the introduction of new economic policy of 1991 in India, a new opportunity opened up for her to forge relations with the wider world. After an initial period of economic crisis, the country in order to achieve economic stability, domestic democratization and preserve her acquired independence have adopted multi-vectored foreign policies to choose their international patterns, while in the economic sphere the country (India) has chosen different degrees for opening of her economy. Within

this framework India has attempted to forge diplomatic relations with various countries of the world including Afghanistan to rejuvenate her age old historical and cultural relations which at the same time has tuned by a desire to meet new contemporary imperatives. With the growing profile of Afghanistan at regional and international level, India has a significant place in Afghanistan's agenda of expanding its bilateral and multilateral ties with the outside world. In such a scenario, the hardest nut to crack is to overcome the crisis that is responsible for impeding the desired extent of economic relations between India and Afghanistan, through geo-economics has essentially been playing a major role in comparison to geo-politics.

Apart from energy and uranium resources, Afghanistan offers a relatively untapped market for Indian consumer goods, especially as consumers in the region have little choice between highly priced imported western products and cheap but lower quality Chinese manufactured goods. Over the years, Indian companies have acquired a foothold in some of the sectors of Afghanistan markets while the potential for Indian investment and expertise has been identified in the areas of energy, agriculture, security, banking, construction and food processing etc. Besides, the potential for Indian assistance to Afghanistan in developing its small and medium scale enterprises is immense as there is a tremendous opportunity in joint venture in different sectors also. Assistance in some of these areas is, however, being provided by India as part of its long running ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) program. After Soviet disintegration, Afghanistan holds a special place in India's foreign policy priorities. India and Afghanistan are rapidly growing economies, thereby have enormous vistas for bilateral cooperation. While India's trade with Afghanistan exhibits a positive trend, but there is a large scope to enhance it further as Afghanistan besides its strategic importance is rich in natural resources.

Why is Afghanistan Important for India?

The republic of Afghanistan is important to India because of its various dimensions, such as strategic location, geographical position, and natural resource base, connectivity as bridge between South and Central Asia, relations with Pakistan and other neighbors. However, the 'New Silk Road 'initiative whereby Afghanistan will 'regain its historical role as a land-bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Eurasia' has some traction[1] in India[2]**.** However, with an improvement in

trade links with Pakistan, there is a hope in the possibility of Afghanistan to become the hub for trade, transportation and energy in the region (Summit on Afghanistan in Delhi, 2012)[3]. The major factors however, which makes Afghanistan important for India are:

a) Afghanistan's Strategic Location and India's Geo-strategic Interests

Afghanistan's geocentric location and its proximity to Iran on the west, Pakistan on the east, the Central Asian republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in the north, a small stretch of border with China in the northeast, enhanced the country's geo-strategic importance manifold. Several world powers became extremely active and grabbed the opportunity in seeking political and economic leverage. The sudden splurge[4] of initiatives and activities from the international community made Afghanistan alive in the global scenario especially among Pakistan, Iran, Russia, China, United States, India etc. Sitting right towards Central and South Asia, India's objective is, to control and influence Afghan nation with a view to winning friendship, investment and political support and therefore the strategic interests of India has to enumerated as: 1) to deny Pakistan's any political (strategic) or economic influence in Afghanistan; 2) to maintain maximum presence of Indians in all sectors of Afghanistan, particularly in security and economic establishments; 3) to establish a counter front against China's economic and political ingress in Central Asian Republics (CARs); and 4) to provide alternate land route against Gawader (Karachi) sea port to Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Afghanistan (Embassy of India).[5]

Besides, strategic interests there are also some geo-economic and geo-political interests of India in Afghanistan which are as: 1) For India, Afghanistan is a potential route for access to Central Asian energy; 2) India is looking Afghanistan as a base to counter China's growing influence in Central Asian economic and energy sectors; 3) Afghanistan is potential market for Indian goods and business, because the bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan has reached $ 8087.95 million in December 2017 (table-1) from $ 25.79 in 1996 constituting a very high growth rate; 4) Ensure her presence and influence in any hydrocarbon pipeline project, which runs through Afghanistan's territory to Pakistan like TAPI and; 5) India is building a port in Chabahar in Iran, which could connect to the Iranian hinterland, and thereby transport Indian goods to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan completely. Besides the aforesaid mentioned interests, India would also like to exploit the

economic potential of Afghanistan through heavy capital-formation among various potentially productive sectors identified by India such as mining, infrastructure, telecommunication, agro-based and small-scale industries, and health, pharmaceuticals, education and information technology (Heart of Asia's Conference, Kabul, 2012)[6] as it was estimated that Afghanistan's mineral wealth valued at $1-3 trillion (Afghanistan Geological Survey, 2017).[7]

b) India's Energy Interests through and in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is India's gateway to energy rich Central Asia – a region which is considered an 'extended neighborhood'. For India, a stable Afghanistan would result in a viable route for transporting Central Asian energy resources to the Indian market. This will provide alternative energy source routes in the volatile Middle East region.[8] Nevertheless, Afghanistan has vast hydrocarbon reserves potential (US Geological Survey, 2002)[9] estimated 49.6 billion cubic meter or 1750.0 billion cubic feet of proved natural gas and 0.4-3.6 billion barrels of oil[10] reserves with a very high reserve to production (R/P) ratio. Besides there are minerals like iron ore (2,200 million tons), copper (60 million tons), cobalt, lithium (substantially high deposits), niobium, uranium, chromites, granite, marble and other metallic and non-metallic minerals (Russian's conducted Survey 1980)[11] in the chest of Afghanistan. However, these reserves are likely to shape energy competition in the Central Asian region. China is also equally involved in this region and there has been a sudden increase in its economic and military influence. India and China are likely to compete in this arena and the over bidding for Petro – Kazakh is an example. Therefore, a stable and friendly Afghanistan would be to India's advantage as an alternative route of fuel supply in order to keep pace with its demand for hydrocarbons that is expected to rise by 2030 (World Energy Council, 2016).[12] On the other side Afghanistan is the gateway for India to reach and to control Central Asian energy market especially to have security for newly natural gas pipeline (TAPI) or India has the opportunity to bypass her biggest threat Pakistan for any insecurity in future.

Nevertheless, the estimated value of these natural resources would completely alter the economic and social profile of Afghanistan (Kirit, 2015).[13] This can assist Afghanistan to achieve fiscal stability by adding considerable revenue to the economy, substantially lower its dependence on foreign aid, improve the balance of payment position due to increase

in exports, and attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the economy (Fig-2). As part of its policy of having inclusive growth, India will seek to help Afghanistan in reaping the benefits of the natural resources by assisting in building infrastructure, undertaking mining projects and developing the distribution network. India's resurgent economy, fiscal management and developed human capital resources can play a pivotal role in facilitating Afghanistan's journey towards fiscal stability.

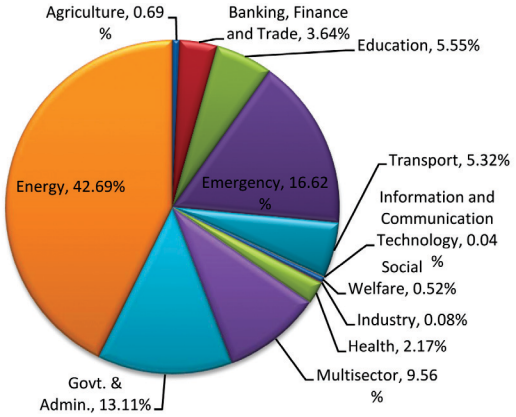
Why Investment in Afghanistan?

Afghanistan is a fast growing emerging market of strategic importance close to some of the largest and fastest-growing markets in the world. Afghanistan is strategically located between the energy-rich republics of Central Asia and the major seaports in South Asia providing a key transit route for Central Asian hydrocarbons (oil and gas) to markets in South Asia as well as overseas. Afghanistan has also natural access to markets of neighboring countries including important fast-growing markets such as China, India and Pakistan. Importantly, India has geopolitical interest for which India has opted to pursue a soft power strategy to engage Afghanistan, preferring to contribute substantially in the civilian sector rather than in defense and security (www.dsafghan.in).[14] India is active and efficient particularly in construction, infrastructure, human capital-formation and mining sectors, besides, also identified the telecommunications, health, pharmaceuticals, and information technology and education sectors for cooperation. However, within the framework of bilateral agreements, India has pledged over $2 billion aid to Afghanistan and India has agreed to build 600km long Bamiyan-Herat rail link which will serve to connect the Hajigak mines to Herat and further to the Iranian port of Chabahar via the Delaram-Zaranj highway, which India had to constructed in 2009 (Fig-1)[15] which could realize the full spectrum of connectivity – from culture to commerce, from traditions to technology, from investments to IT, from services to strategy and from people to politics, rather will mark a new chapter in regional cooperation & connectivity; and some of the important projects on which India has been invested in Afghanistan are: a) An air-freight corridor, b) Supply of 250,000 tons of wheat; c) Construction of the Parliament building ($178 million); d) Construction of the Pul-i-Khumri to Kabul power line ($120 million), e) Salma Dam power project ($ 130 million); f) Construction of the Delaram-Zaranj road ($150 million) and; g) Food assistance to primary

school children, and construction and rehabilitation of schools($ 321 million). Notwithstanding the fact, India has also committed Afghanistan to have long-term engagement in shaping its development assistance to rebuild energy sector, infrastructure, institutions, education and technical assistance which aimed at helping Afghanistan to achieve self-sufficiency in various sectors (Fig 2) in 2016-17.[16] Hence, the aforesaid mentioned exercise and activities made India the fifth largest investor in Afghanistan's stability and quest for economic and social development.

Fig. 1
Proposed Rail-line of Hajigak-Zaranj-Zahedan-Chabahar

Fig. 2
India's Investment Contribution in Afghanistan in Various Sectors (2016-17)



Scope & Limitation of the Study

The study will provide the significant information about the opportunities of investment in Afghanistan for both domestic and foreign investors and the effective role of foreign direct investment to the economy of Afghanistan. This information can be used by the foreign and local investors by viewing the availability of strong low-cost and skilled human resources, large and growing domestic markets, availability of abundant land and natural resources, low cost raw materials, the available market of Afghanistan and its strategic location. Significantly, a good number of researchers across the world have theoretically investigated the trade potential between India and Afghanistan, but as such no one has empirically examined their gravity of trade. Thus, the absence of such kind of research is the core objective for this study. The present study, therefore, attempt to bridge this research gap with broader objectives to study: a) the potential of trade between India and Afghanistan; b) the gravitation of trade between India and Afghanistan; and c) the long-run trade relation and association between India and Afghanistan. Thus, on the bases of aforesaid literature framework and objectives, following hypotheses have been laid to carry out the investigation of: 1) India's economic relations with Afghanistan will grow in future in view of its (India's) huge export and investment potential; and 2) Given the economic mass, market size and geographical distance of India and Afghanistan, there exists huge bilateral trade potential between these two economies.

Database

The study is based on the panel data of fifty six years (1960-2017) and therefore, the data on imports, exports**,** GDP**,** population, distance and factors influencing trade flows between India and her trade partner(Afghanistan) has obtained from the Ministry of Commerce & Industries, Government of India; International Trade Centre (ITC); International Monetary Fund (IMF); and World Bank (WB). Nonetheless, the study used the secondary data which limit the degree of accuracy but there was lack of uniformity in the various organization's data hence the researcher was unable to accurately analyze all the variables. However, there are so many other factors which affect GDP growth, some which are quantifiable and others not. Hence, the study focused on certain reliable variables.

Theoretical Background of Trade

Writings on international trade can be traced from 17th century, where a group of men (merchants, bankers, government officials) wrote essays and pamphlets on international trade that advocated an economic philosophy known as Mercantilism. Mercantilists believed that a nation could gain in international trade only at the expense of other nations. They advocated restrictions on imports, incentives for export.

According to Adam Smith (1776), an English Economist, trade is based on absolute advantage and benefits both nations. That is, when each nation specializes in the production of a commodity of its absolute advantage and exchange part of its output for the commodity of its absolute disadvantage, both nations end up consuming more of both commodities. However, this theory cannot explain why countries which do not have absolute advantage still get benefited from international trade (Smith Adam, 1776).[17]

David Ricardo (1817), also an English Economist, answered this question in his book 'principles of political economy and taxation' in which he presented the law of comparative advantage theory which postulates that even if one nation is less efficient than the other nation in the production of both commodities there is still a basis for mutually beneficial trade. The less efficient nation should specialize in the production and export of the commodity in which its absolute disadvantage is less (Ricardo David, 1817).[18] However, Gottfried Haberler, another economist, in 1936 explained the law of comparative disadvantage in terms of opportunity cost theory (Maneschi Andrea, 1998).[19]

Subsequently, a model given by two Swedish economists Eli Heckcsher and Bertil Ohlin had extended the David Ricardo's theory and developed an influential theory of trade. Heckscher-Ohlin model is enhanced from the simple model of David Ricardo by adding capital and land alongside labor and fundamental factors. As one of the leading theories about the determinants of trade pattern of a nation, Heckscher-Ohlin theory or factor endowment theory which is considered the modern trade theory, explains comparative advantages in terms of factor endowment. This theory advocates that a nation will export the commodity whose production requires the intensive use of nation's relatively abundant and cheap factor and import the commodity whose production requires the intensive use of nation's relatively scarce and expensive factor (Heckscher Eli, 2006).[20]

Obviously, the classical trade theory indicates that countries which are less similar tend to trade more. Therefore, it is unable to explain the huge proportion of trade between nations with similar factor of endowments and intra-industrial trade, which dominate the trade of developed economies. This is the motivation for new trade theories which has been established in the 1980s. New trade theories explain the world trade based on the economies of scale, imperfect competition and product differentiation thereby ease the strict assumptions of classical theory (Krugman Paul, 2005).[21] However, recently a new model i.e., Gravity Model has been utilized intensively to explain bilateral trade flows between two countries which cannot be solved by other economic theories. In physics, according to Newton's universal law of gravitation, the gravitational attraction between two objects is proportional of their masses and inversely related to square of their distance. Thus in economics, Jan Timbergen, a Dutch economist, first applied gravity model to analyze foreign trade flows in 1962. Krugman and Obstfeld in 2005 also utilize this (gravity) model for trade activities. After first research of Timbergen, there have been many other economists applying gravity model with similar purposes related to different countries of the world.

Model Specification

The gravity model **(**Krugeman Paul, 2015)[22] has been used to analyze the bilateral trade which is directly proportional to the GDP and inversely proportional to the distance between two nations rather predicts that bilateral trade is a positive function of income and negative function of distance. If two countries are i and j, then gravity model can be represented as:

$$T_{ij} = A\left[\frac{(Y_i)^{\alpha} \times (Y_j)^{\beta}}{(D_{ij})^{\gamma}}\right] \ldots\ldots\ldots\

by how many percent trade increases when the partner country's GDP increases by one percent (keeping other things constant); Gama measures by how many percent trade decreases when the distance to the partner country increases by one percent (keeping other things constant). This can be seen by taking the partial derivatives of the gravity equation with regard to Yj and Dij and solve for Alpha & Bata.[23]

As impact of geographical proximity on trade is negative, it suggests that distance affects trade in the opposite way $dT_{ij}/dD_{ij} < 0$ due to cost of transportation. Hence, the expected sign of parameter Gama for variable Distance is negative (Gama<0).

Solving for b we obtain:

b = % change in T_{ij}/% change in $Y_{j.}$

That is, b is the elasticity of trade with regard to the partner country's GDP. Similarly, if we keep the home country's GDP and the partner country's GDP constant and solve for c we obtain:

c = % change in T_{ij}/% change in $D_{ij.}$

This is the elasticity of trade with regard to the distance from the partner country. In the theory section of this paper, it was pointed out in the brief introduction the gravity model **(**Krugman**)** that the coefficients b and c are elasticity's of trade with regard to GDP and distance to the partner country.

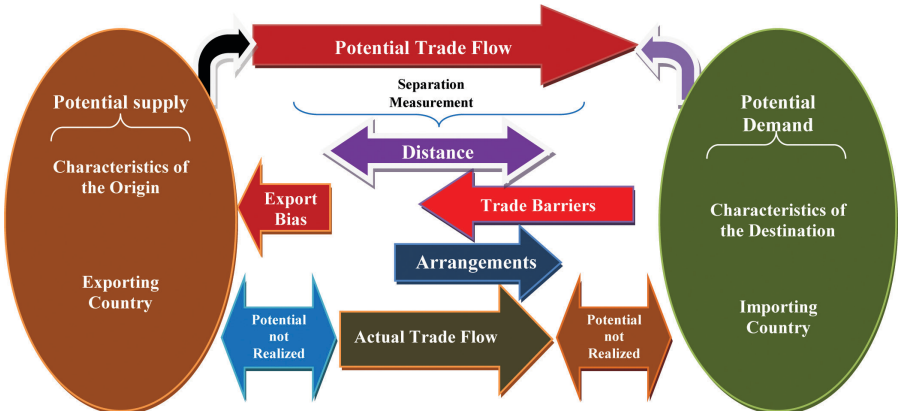
Now, we can write equation (1) in the following form:

$$\boldsymbol{Trade_{ij}} = A.\left[\frac{(GDP_i)^{\alpha}(GDP_j)^{\beta}}{(Distance_{ij})^{\gamma}}\right] \ldots\ldots\ldots\

$$Log\,(Trade_{ij}) = \alpha_0 + \alpha\, log(GDP_i) + \beta\, log(GDP_j) + \delta.\, log(POP)_i + \varepsilon.\, log(POP_j) + \theta.\, log\left[\frac{GDP_i}{POP_i}\right] + \pi.\, log\left[\frac{GDP_j}{GDP_j}\right] - \gamma.\, log(Distance_{ij}) + \mu_{ij} \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (7)$$

Parameter μ_{ij} accounts for all other unobservable variables (also known as dummy variables) that are not explained directly through gravity equation. Importantly, the GDPs of both countries acts as a proxy for the production capabilities as countries with higher GDP are likely to have a greater demand for goods in the international market. However, the variable distance[24] is a proxy for cost of transportation. There are also several more frictions such as tariff, non-tariff barriers, culture, language, boarder dispute, attitudes, national or international policies that vary across geography and time; have directly influence on trade (subsidies to industries) and some may support trade indirectly (such as policies towards creating adequate infrastructure for transportation).

Graphical Design of Gravity Model



Pattern of Trade between India-Afghanistan

The total bilateral trade of India and Afghanistan has reached to $ 8087.95 million in 2017 (table 1). It increased from $ 25.79 million in 1996 to $ 79.23 million in 2000 representing a growth of about 89.13%. It further grew to register a three digit figure in 2007 and crossed the figure of 300 to reach at $588.74 million in 2009 which represents a twenty twofold increase. Since then it has been showing a continued growth to touch the figure of $ 834.5 million in 2015 but has declined afterwards and stopped at $ 632.7 million in 2017 (table 1, Fig.3, Fig. 4). The question arises why trade has gone down by high percentage, the answer is, it is because the law of demand of either sides of the two nations.

Table 1

Trend of total and Bilateral Trade Balance Between India and Afghanistan (1996-2017)

(US $ in Millions)

S. No	Years	Exports (US $ in Millions)	% Share	% Growth	Imports (US $ in Millions)	% Share	% Growth	Trade Balance ($US)	Total Trade ($US)	% Share	% Growth of Total Trade
1.	1996	22.74	0.069	-	3.05	0.0078	-	19.69	25.79	0.318869	-
2.	1997	21.25	0.0611	-6.57	10.7	0.0258	250.42	10.55	31.95	0.395032	23.88523
3.	1998	12.81	0.0386	-39.71	28.14	0.0664	163.01	-15.33	40.95	0.506309	28.16901
4.	1999	33.2	0.0902	159.23	21.06	0.0423	-25.18	12.14	54.26	0.670875	32.50305
5.	2000	25.86	0.058	-22.11	26.59	0.0526	26.27	-0.73	52.45	0.648496	-3.33579
6.	2001	24.37	0.0556	-5.77	17.52	0.0341	-34.1	6.85	41.89	0.517931	-20.1335
7.	2002	60.77	0.1153	149.36	18.46	0.0301	5.33	42.31	79.23	0.979605	89.13822
8.	2003	145.47	0.2279	139.98	40.51	0.0518	119.5	140.96	185.98	2.29947	134.7343
9.	2004	165.44	0.198	13.73	47.01	0.0422	16.03	118.43	212.45	2.626747	14.23271
10.	2005	142.67	0.1384	-13.76	58.42	0.0392	24.29	84.25	201.09	2.486291	-5.34714
11.	2006	182.11	0.1441	27.64	34.37	0.0185	-14.16	147.74	216.48	2.676574	7.65329
12.	2007	249.21	0.1528	36.85	109.97	0.0437	219.92	139.24	359.18	4.440928	65.91833
13.	2008	394.23	0.2128	58.2	126.24	0.0416	14.8	267.99	520.47	6.435129	44.90506

14.	2009	463.55	0.2593	17.58	125.19	0.0434	-0.83	338.36	588.74	7.279224	13.11699
15.	2010	422.41	0.1691	-8.88	145.03	0.0395	16.64	277.38	567.44	7.015869	-3.6179
16.	2011	510.9	0.167	20.95	132.5	0.0271	-9.26	378.4	643.4	7.955044	13.38644
17.	2012	472.63	0.1573	-7.49	159.55	0.0325	20.42	313.08	632.18	7.816319	-1.74386
18.	2013	474.34	0.1509	0.36	208.77	0.0464	30.84	265.57	683.11	8.446022	8.05625
19.	2014	422.56	0.1362	-10.92	261.91	0.0585	25.46	160.65	684.47	8.462837	0.199089
20.	2015	526.6	0.2008	24.62	307.9	0.0808	17.56	218.7	834.5	10.31782	21.91915
21.	2016	506.34	0.1836	-3.85	292.9	0.0762	-4.87	213.44	799.24	9.881861	-4.22528
22.	2017	397.39	0.2387	-21.51	235.31	0.0914	-19.66	162.08	632.7	7.822749	-20.8373
	Total	5676.85	-	-	2411.1	-	-	3265.75	8087.95	-	-

Source: Authors calculation on the basis of the data and information provided by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India.

Trade Potential Between India & Afghanistan

Importantly, we noticed that bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan has shown a declining trend in the last couple of years because of varied factors. On the basis of this information we tried to find out the potential of trade with the help of Gravity model (table-3). However, the coefficient of GDPs of India and Afghanistan are both positive and significant while the coefficient of distance is negative and significant at 0.05% level of significance respectively. The results show that an increase in India's GDP by 1% would increase bilateral trade of India with Afghanistan by 28.7%. Increase in the GDP of Afghanistan by corresponding amount (%1) would increase the bilateral trade by 2.34%.

Fig. 3
Trend of Bilateral Trade between India and Afghanistan (1996-2017)

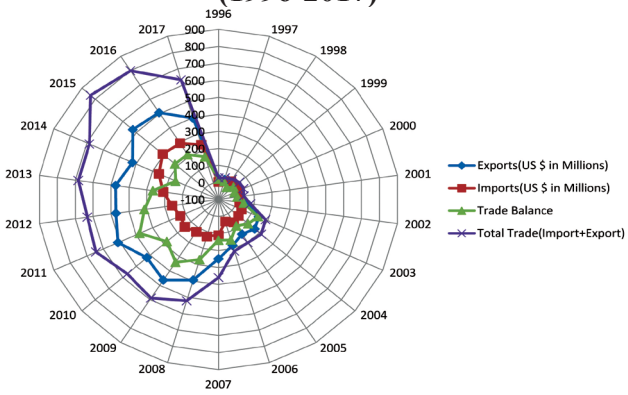


Fig. 4
% Growth of Imports/Exports/Total Trade of India and Afghanistan (1996-2017)

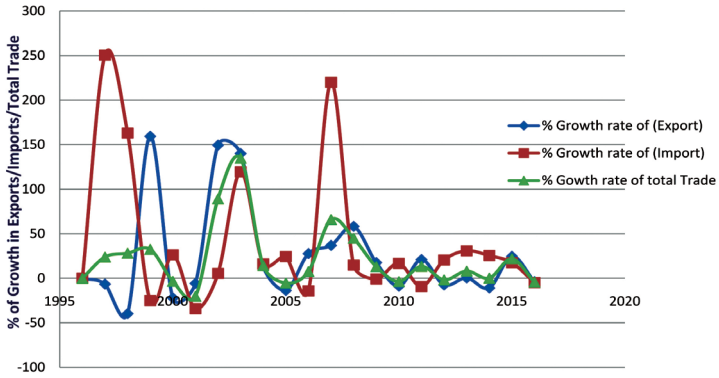
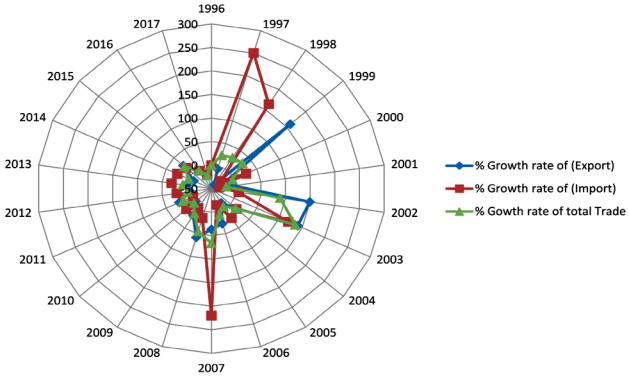


Fig. 4
% Growth of Imports/Exports/Total Trade of India and Afghanistan (1996-2017)



When the distance between the two countries increases, trade will not fall substantially. But, if there is any increase in the distance say by 1%, trade will not fall by any percent predicted by the value of Dij(0.001%). Nevertheless, if there is 1% increase in the per capita income of India there will be 26.82% increase in trade with Afghanistan and the corresponding increase in per capita income of Afghanistan, the trade of Afghanistan will increase by 3.29% with India. Moreover, if there is 1% increase population in India, there will be 36.45% increase of India's trade with Afghanistan and in corresponding increase in the population of Afghanistan, the trade of Afghanistan will increase by 3.29% with India. The output elasticity coefficients of GDP_i and GDP_j ($a + b + c = 28.45+2.34-0.001 = 30.79 > 1$) is greater than one which signifies that both the countries have great potential of further bilateral trade as it is being justified by the high value of R-squared (0.874239826) which expresses that 87% of trade has been explained by these independent variables in the model. Significantly, the regression equation of the gravity model is depicted as:

$$Log(Trade_{ij}) = -140.51 + 28.76\,log(GDP_i) + 2.34\,log(GDP_j) + 36.45log(POP)_i + 2.11\,log(POP_j) + 26.82\,log\left[\frac{GDP_i}{POP_i}\right] + 3.29\,log\left[\frac{GDP_j}{GDP_j}\right] - 0.001\,log(Dis_{ij}) \quad \ldots\ldots (8)$$

or

$$Log\,(Trade_{ij}) = -140.51 + log(GDP_i)^{28.76} + log(GDP_j)^{2.34} + log(POP_i)^{36.45} + log(POP_j)^{2.11} + log[\frac{GDP_i}{GDP_i}]^{26.82} + log[\frac{GDP_j}{GDP_j}]^{3.29} - log(Dis_{ij})^{0.001} \quad \ldots\ldots (8)$$

or

$$Log\,(Trade_{ij}) = -140.51\,[log(GDP_i)^{28.76}\,log(GDP_j)^{2.34}\,log(POP_i)^{36.45}\,log(POP_j)^{2.11}\,log[\frac{GDP_i}{GDP_i}]^{26.82}\,log[\frac{GDP_j}{GDP_j}]^{3.29} - log(Dis_{ij})^{0.001}] \quad \ldots\ldots (8)$$

or

$$Log\,(Trade_{ij}) = -140.51\,[log(GDP_i)^{28.76}\,log(GDP_j)^{2.34}\,log(POP_i)^{36.45}\,log(POP_j)^{2.11}\,log[\frac{GDP_i}{GDP_i}]^{26.82}\,log[\frac{GDP_j}{GDP_j}]^{3.29} / log(Dis_{ij})^{0.001}] \quad \ldots\ldots (9)$$

Table 2
Estimation of Gravity Model Results

Variables	*Coefficients*	*Standard Error*	*t. Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	-140.5166247	52.22856294	-2.6904172	0.00991254
Ln_POPi	36.45028091	27.1344888	1.34331924	0.01575861
Ln_GDPi	28.76121928	26.41564408	-1.0887949	0.02819158
Ln_POPj	2.116411859	1.113997376	1.89983559	0.05373422
Ln_GDPj	2.34599988	1.747934356	1.3421556	0.01861327
Ln_Dij	0.001	0.00021	1.65535	0.00000000
Ln_(GDP/POP)i	26.82180401	26.07611627	1.02859658	0.03004769
Ln_(GDP/POP)j	3.292310	0.00001	1.65535	0.00000000
Multiple R:	0.935007928			
R-square:	0.874239826			
Adj. R Square	0.817091981			
Std. Error:	0.094030376			
Obs.:	52			

Source: Authors have calculated it on the basis of the data given by the World Bank, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India and Afghanistan.

Potential Index

If the trade potential index[25] is at 1, then the actual trade is exactly equal to the estimated potential trade given the GDP and the distance between the trading countries. If the trade potential index is less than 1, then the actual trade is more than the potential trade. If the trade potential index is more than 1, it implies that actual trade is lower than the potential trade. However, it has been analyzed that the trade potential index of India is more than 1(a + b = 28.45+2.34 = 30.79 > 1) which means that the actual trade is less than the potential trade of India; it may be because that India has to face various security challenges of bilateral trade with Afghanistan. In spite of this, there is every scope to improve its trade with Afghanistan in future. In fact, there is also scope and opportunities in enhancing the trade, which implies that there is an increasing gap between the actual and prospective trade. However, it has also been observed that there is perfect positive correlation among all the variables (table 4).

Table 3
Correlation Matrix of India & Afghanistan
Trade Potential Variables

Variables	*(Trade)ij*	*Popi (in millions)*	*GDPi at (FC)*	*Popj (in millions)*	*GDPj at (Fc)*	*(Dist)ij in Km*
(Trade)ij	1					
Popi	0.76254405	1				
GDPi at (FC)	0.79532633	0.8448603	1			
Popj	0.89507465	0.838137526	0.9488203	1		
GDPj at (FC)	0.82728467	0.730082911	0.967919773	0.935860188	1	
(Dis)ij	-1.439E-16	-6.17842E-16	0	-4.78775E-16	3.0166E-16	1

Source: Authors have calculated this on the basis of the data given by the World Bank, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India and Afghanistan.

Potential Areas for Future Cooperation

The emerging economy of Afghanistan displays all the signs of being the new market of the future. Since the nature of competition has undergone a significant change, there is need for concerted and focused efforts to ensure that all Indian and South Asian organizations act cohesively in tapping the opportunities offered by this region. It is important to take note of some potential areas in order to improve the possibilities of trade between India and Afghanistan. Some of the important areas have potential to invest, could enhance the trade corridor between the two countries such as: Infrastructure, education corridor, mining and industrial sector etc. Notwithstanding the fact that India is investing in Afghanistan in order to bypass Pakistan rather India should have a rational understanding with Pakistan on the outstanding Kashmir issue for the collective benefits (including Kashmir) such as India will get security from Pakistan to realize the dream of Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan India (TAPI) natural gas pipeline to pass it through Pakistanian territory without any future threat. However, if such an investment would be utilized & invested in J&K State, India will certainly realize the dream of 'New Switzerland' in Kashmir and therefore, to what extent they would remain in abusing and accusing each other on the cost of Kashmir, instead of this they should re-examine & rethink over the outstanding issues because the countries that perform excellently in economic, industrial and trade domains, will have greater impact on other economies than those possessing bigger military and weaponry systems.

More importantly, a strong economic and human interaction among the countries is going to be a major strength for any country in the near future. Two Asian economies have joined hands to form an Economic Corridor which is known as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to achieve their shared objective of mutual growth. The proposed corridor impacts relations between India and Pakistan, as it passes through the Gilgit Baltistan area of J&K State. No doubt that there are conflicts between India and Pakistan, but when the people of both sides will be engaged in economic activities and progress, this could completely minimize the conflict and stakeholders some time may think over the peace of both the regions. This would be rather a step towards the commercialization of Line of Control (LOC) Trade. Hence, if both the countries will harmonize with the idea, then CPEC can be extended to India through supplementary links from Punjab and Kashmir thus, turning the mutual security threat suspicion to benefits such as, CPEC has the capacity to materialize a faster culmination of Iran-Pak-India gas pipeline to fulfill the energy needs of India. So India should live with the game otherwise India's role would be vanished in future decisions of any economic activity among themselves.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it follows that with the passage of time, India's economic relations will grow as there is a large trade potential between the two countries which is also clear from the predicted variables (for economic strength were presented with GDP_{ij} and distance was analyzed through the changes in import prices of oil) of the gravity model. It was also proved that expected parameters defined in theoretical gravity model assumed positive correlation between economic strength and exports of trading partners. This assumption was empirically tested and proven using correlation matrix. Demand for Indian export products is almost perfectly correlated with the changes in Afghanistan's GDP which arises from the similarity of trade structures of both trading partners. Low inelasticity of exports in respect to changes in transport costs (oil prices) was achieved according to regression output. Variable 'Distance' didn't give expected parameter's value (negative) although its regression coefficient was close to zero. Nevertheless, results of an empirical test conducted on a set of data for India shows that gravity model serves as a good explanation for trade flows and patterns of international trade. Furthermore, in view of the Afghanistan's geo-

economic scenario, India's increasing investment must continue for its stable, vibrant economic and overall relations with Afghanistan.

References & Endnotes

1. A way of treating a broken bone in a body that involves using special equipment to pull the bone gradually back into its correct place.
2. Although, there is also widespread skepticism of its feasibility.
3. India hosted an Investment Summit on Afghanistan in Delhi in June 2012, inviting other 'Heart of Asia' countries, which sought to highlight the opportunities for investing in Afghanistan.
4. To spend a lot of money on something that you do not really need.
5. Embassy of India, Kabul's website: http://eoi.gov.in/kabul.
6. At the 2012 Kabul 'Heart of Asia's conference, India offered to lead two confidence-building measures, intended to support Afghanistan and integrate it into the regional economy. Within India there is confidence that it can 'take a lead in facilitating trade and commercial opportunities for Afghanistan and the region'.
7. Afghanistan Geological Survey. (2017). Information Resources at AGS: Kabul, Afghanistan, Ministry of Mines/available at http://www.bgs.ac.uk/AfghanMinerals/info.htm.
8. For example, the Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (TAPI) pipeline that was tipped to carry gas from the Daulatabad fields in Turkmenistan to India and Pakistan via Afghanistan is backed strongly by the US as an alternative to the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline.
9. As mentioned in a report by the US geological survey in 2002.
10. Both resources are concentrated in the Amu Darya basin in the West and the Afghan-Tajik basin in the East.
11. Afghanistan is well endowed with natural resources. Surveys conducted by the Russians during the 1980s and further refined by the US Geological Survey (USGS) post 2000 have conclusively established the presence of large deposits of minerals in Afghanistan.
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22. The gravity model of trade (Krugman et al., 2015) predicts that trade increases with the partner country's GDP: the bigger your trade partner's GDP, the more you trade with that partner country. The model also predicts that trade decreases with the distance to the partner country: the further away your trade partner, the less you trade with that partner country.
23. If we are not familiar with calculus (and we needn't be for this course) the same argument can be made by using the following approximation. We will remember from our macroeconomics classes that when three variables are in a multiplicative relationship: Z = X x Y. Then, following approximation holds for small percentage changes: percentage change in Z = percentage change in X + percentage change in Y (= means: is approximately equal to). Use this property to express the gravity equation in terms of percentage changes: Percentage change in Tij ≈ percentage change in A + a x (percentage change in Yi) + b x (percentage change in Yj) – c x (percentage change in Dij). As A is assumed to be a constant, the percentage change of A is zero. If we keep the home country's GDP and distance constant, we obtain: percentage change in Tij = b x (percentage change in Yj).
24. How to measure distance is a key question in setting gravity model properly. One way is to use great circle distance between capital cities of trade partners (country i and country j). The other way is to use auxiliary variables that represent changes in prices that occur in process of trade between countries i and j. These can be measured either using real exchange rate or the price of oil. The latter is chosen as a suitable representative of transport costs in empirical part of the study. Due to the mentioned transport costs it is impossible to hold Heckscher-Ohlin's assumption that international trade will equalize prices of all trade-able goods in countries that participate in trade. Transport costs inhibit trade and discriminate prices in both trade partners as well.
25. (Trade Potential Index)t = (Predicted total trade)t/(Actual bilateral trade)t.

Crop Production and Productivity Variations in Uzbekistan with Special Reference to Grain Crops

Atiqullah Malik
Abdul Rauf Shah

Abstract
Uzbekistan is a landlocked country in Central Asia, with a total geographical area of 447 400 km². The country gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Due to favourable climatic conditions for crop production, agriculture has long been considered one of the priority areas of the economic development. The country's economy depends mainly on agricultural sector. As late as 1992, roughly 40 percent of its net material product (NMP) was in agriculture, although only about 10 percent of the country's land area was cultivated. Uzbekistan restructured Soviet type of collective farms after independence and such efforts contributed to the growth of private sector's share in agricultural production. The two dominant crops grown in the country are cotton and wheat. Both the crops are important for the country, wheat for domestic use and cotton for exports. However, after independence much importance has been given to grain crops especially wheat to meet demand of the domestic food consumption. The present study analyzes the growth patterns in grain crops mainly wheat, rice, barley and corn for a period of 27years i.e. 1991-2017 and thereby analyses yearly productivity variations and that way review the stability of crop production.

Keywords
Agriculture, Arable land, Yield, Production,Modern Technology, Salinity, cultivated Area.

Introduction

Agricultural sector plays an important role in the overall economic development of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Recent estimates reveal that agricultural variable provides employment to nearly 60% of the rural population. This sector forms a base for the development of leading industries in Uzbekistan and is one of the main sources of export resources and hard currency earnings in the country. Agriculture sector accounts for 16.6% of the GDP, 25.9% of all labour force and 13.65 of export earnings. Agriculture and allied industries primarily those related to cotton and foods have consistently contributed to Uzbekistan's gross domestic product.

Table 1
Agricultural Share

Sector	Agricultural Share
Employment	25.9%
GDP	16.6%
Export	13.6%

Source: CIA World Fact book

In the recent years, share of agriculture in total GDP of the Uzbekistan has declined from 30.1 % in 2000 to 21.7 % in 2007, and 16.6% in 2016. However, over the same period agricultural production rose steadily at annual rates of 6% to 7%. The declining share of agriculture in the GDP of the country is mainly due to higher growth rates in other sectors of the economy (UNDP). Official statistical data indicates that between 1995 and 2006 the gross production of grains increased by 103.6 %, pulses 350 %, potatoes 132 %, meat 33.5 %, and milk 32.5 %(UNDP).

Table 2
Land use

Total land		Percentage
Agricultural Land	Arable land	10.1%
	Permanent crops	0.8%
	Pasture land	51.7%
	Total agriculture land	62.6%
Forests		7.7%
Other		29.7%
Total		100%

Source: CIA World Factbook

Fig 1
Land use Spectrum in Uzbekistan

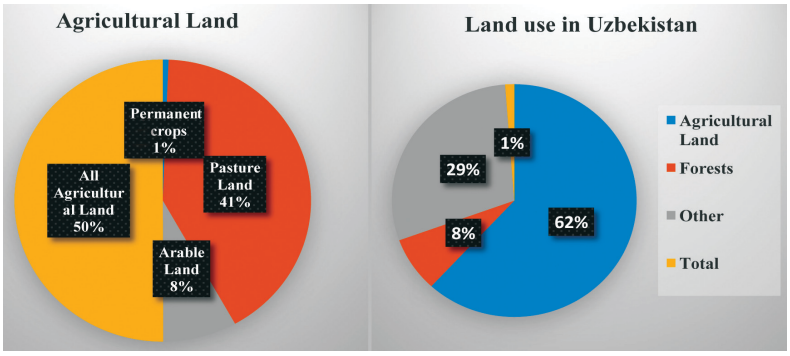

Figure drawn on the basis Table 2

In Uzbekistan, the basic land use categories are Arable Land, permanent crops, hay field, pastures, forests and composite lands. Figure1 provides an overall view of the land use spectrum in the Republic. Out of total land area of 44740000 hectares, 62.6% is devoted to agricultural use which includes 10.1% arable land, 0.8% permanent crops and 51.7% pasture land. Forests occupy around 7.7% of the land area of the Republic and 29.7% is used for other purposes (Table 2). In Uzbekistanonly 11 percent of the land area is suitable for agriculture and cultivation of crops. Majority of the cultivated areas is irrigated by the by well-planned irrigation system.

Table 3
Area under Different Crops

Crop	**Area**
Grain Crops	1.676 Million Hectares
Industrial Crops	1.286 Million Hectares
Potatoes	87,400 Hectares
Vegetables	230,500 Hectares
Melons	60,600 Hectares
Fodder Crops	352,000 Hectares
Gardens Was	283,400 Hectares
Vineyards	133,000 Hectares

Source: USDA

Materials and Methods

The present study has been carried out by using secondary data. Secondary data on yield and production of grain crops for a period of 27 years from 1991 to 2017 were obtained from the publications of the Govt. of Uzbekistan, different year books of Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and CIA World Fact books. The data has been analysed and interpreted through tabulation and simple percentage methods.

Percentage growth rate has been used to measure yearly growth rate in production and yield over the study period (1991 to 2017) by using the following formula:

$$PR = \frac{(V\ Present - V\ Past)}{V\ Past} \times 100$$

Where: PR = Percent Rate
V Present = Present or Future Value
V Past = Past or Present Value

Results and Discussion

The main grain crops of Uzbekistan are wheat and barley. There are intense efforts for converting arid areas into agricultural areas through wheat and barley cultivation, so that area under grains is increased. Corn is another important food grain, generally cultivated on irrigated tracts of the Republic. Other important grain crops grown in Uzbekistan are rice, sorghum and millet, but theirproduction is low as compared to wheat and barley.Poor yield is the main cause of low grain production. Increased salinity of the soil, lack of modern technology and equipment, poor weed control measures are the main causes of low yields in grains.

Among industrial crops cotton is Uzbekistan's main crop.The country is among the world's 10 largest cotton producers. During the recent years the number of cotton plantations have been reduced to diversify its production into cereals, as such area under cotton plantations has been reduced. Large tracts of cotton growing areas has been replaced with food grains mainly due to the primary importance given to the food crops.

Table 4

Wheat, Rice, Barley and Corn - Growth in Production and Yield

Year	Production (MT)				Percentage Growth Rate				Yield (MT/Hectare)				Percentage Growth Rate			
	Wheat	Rice	Barley	corn	Wheat	Rice	Barley	Corn	Wheat	Rice	Barley	Corn	Wheat	Rice	Barley	Corn
1991	610	327	324	431	---	---	---	---	1	3	1	4	---	---	---	---
1992	950	338	360	367	55.74	3.36	11.11	-14.85	2	3	1	4	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1993	800	268	292	404	-15.79	-20.71	-18.89	10.08	1	3	1	4	-50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1994	1350	281	300	276	68.75	4.85	2.74	-31.68	1	3	1	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	-25.00
1995	2350	191	321	181	74.07	-32.03	7.00	-34.42	2	2	1	3	100.00	-33.33	0.00	0.00
1996	2700	284	203	137	14.89	48.69	-36.76	-24.31	2	2	1	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1997	3100	225	150	139	14.81	-20.77	-26.11	1.46	2	2	2	3	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00

1998	3600	206	142	160	16.13	-8.44	-5.33	15.11	3	2	1	3	50.00	0.00	-50.00	0.00
1999	3700	248	120	165	2.78	20.39	-15.49	3.13	3	2	2	3	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
2000	3600	99	120	55	-2.70	-60.08	0.00	-66.67	3	3	2	3	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00
2001	3400	44	200	30	-5.56	-55.56	66.67	-45.45	3	2	3	2	0.00	-33.33	50.00	-33.33
2002	5000	114	200	150	47.06	159.09	0.00	400.00	4	3	3	4	33.33	50.00	0.00	100.00
2003	5400	217	150	145	8.00	90.35	-25.00	-3.33	4	3	1	4	0.00	0.00	-66.67	0.00
2004	5250	118	220	155	-2.78	-45.62	46.67	6.90	4	3	3	4	0.00	0.00	200.00	0.00
2005	5800	108	240	160	10.48	-8.47	9.09	3.23	4	3	3	5	0.00	0.00 %	0.00	25.00
2006	5850	143	240	160	0.86	32.41	0.00	0.00	5	4	3	5	25.00	33.33	0.00	0.00
2007	6200	130	240	160	5.98	-9.09	0.00	0.00	5	4	3	5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2008	6000	72	240	160	-3.23	-44.62	0.00	0.00	4	3	3	5	-20.00	-25.00	0.00	0.00
2009	6200	126	240	160	3.33	75.00	0.00	0.00	4	4	3	5	0.00	33.33	0.00	0.00
2010	6500	135	240	160	4.84	7.14	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	5	25.00	-25.00	0.00	0.00
2011	6300	135	240	160	-3.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2012	6700	135	240	120	6.35	0.00	0.00	-25.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	-40.00
2013	6800	135	240	120	1.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2014	7150	135	240	120	5.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2015	7200	135	240	120	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2016	7200	135	240	120	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2017	7200	135	240	120	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	3	3	3	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source: USDA

Fig 2
Production (MT) - Wheat, Rice, Barley and Corn (1991-2017)

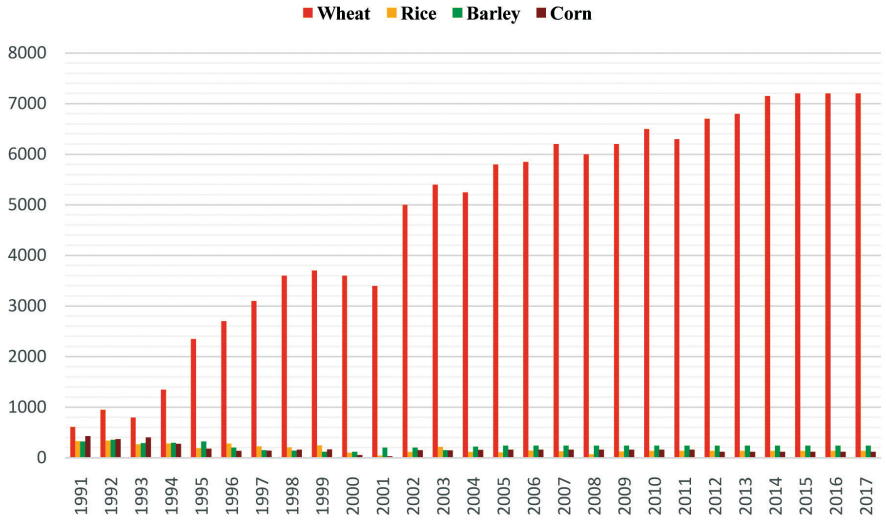

Figure drawn on the basis Table 4

Fig 3
Yield (MT/Hectare) -Wheat, Rice, Barley and Corn (1991-2017)

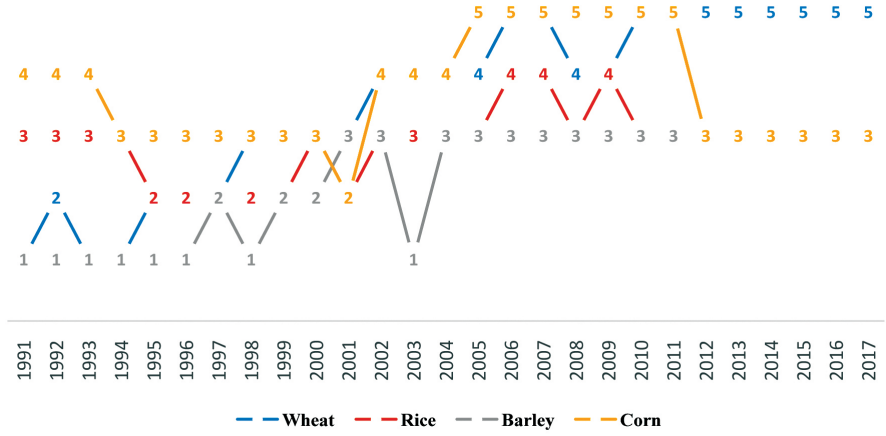

Figure drawn on the basis Table 4

Growth in Wheat production has recorded an upward trend. In the period of 1997 and 2001 the growth rate has not shown much fluctuations with the production varying between 3100 MT to 3400MT and yield 2-3 MT/Hectare. Rice production during the period 1991-1995has decreased from 327 to 191 MT, thereby registering a negative growth of 20.71% in 1993 and 32.03% in 1995. The yield in rice has shown

minor fluctuations between 1991-2000. Among other grains Corn has suffered a serious setback and has recorded a negative growth of 93% during 1991-2001. The production has declined from 431MT to 31 MT, and the yield has come down from 4MT/hectare to 2 MT/Hectare. The production of Barley has also declined between 1991-2000 and has recorded a negative growth of 62.96% but yield has remained constant to some extant in the said period.

In the period after 2001 onwards, Wheat has recorded highest growth. The production has increased from 3400 MT in 2001 to 7200MT in 2017 and the yield increased about 5 MT/Hectare. The main reasons for increased growth in Wheat production is that a large number of Cotton growing area have been reduced and diverted to Wheat, with the primary objective to achieve domestic demand for grain production in the country. However, the production of other grain crops especially Rice, Barley and Corn has almost remained stable with little fluctuations. The yield of these crops has also varied between 3 to 5 MT/Hectare. The production and productivity of other grain crops has not crossed the limits of Wheat production. However, Barley comparatively has gone high in production rate. Remaining crops include Rice, Corn, Maize, and other crops have maintained a steady growth with the exception that Corn is leading in yield. However cereal crops in totality have maintained stability in production, growth and productivity and have contributed a major share in the development of agricultural economy in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Out of total agricultural area grain crops occupy around 1.676 Million Hectares.

With vast differences in irrigational facilities, the agricultural attributes have shown diversity all over the Republic. The landforms, soil, climate etc. have played a wide role in effecting the land use and spatial distribution of crops. Relief and structure of land have exercised a direct influence on the land use, cropping pattern and spatial diversity in crop yield. The areas having assured rainfall and developed water supply differ from the areas where rainfall is more or less scanty. If such areas are irrigated properly and provided with better incentives, they can yield better results. Thus irrigation is the principle means for expanding the cultivated area, increasing and stabilizing the yield and diversifying agricultural production.

Suggestions and Conclusion

The grain crops mostly Wheat has bright growth prospects and the important reason being that domestic demand for food consumption

can be met. Cotton industry can employ a large workforce and can turn into an important industry. However, there are a number of problems in the agricultural sector which requires solutions. The regional imbalance in crop production, distribution and yield tend to reduce the efficiency of agricultural and hence reduce the economic benefits of the farmers. The country need to encourage the agriculture sector given its high economic prospects and employment opportunities. This will help to save livelihood of millions of people in the country who are directly or indirectly associated with this sector. The water related problems especially its scarcity, pollution and inadequate water management are the priority ecological solution in the nearest future. Sustainable management of water and agricultural biodiversity needed. Under ecological perspective it is suggested to integrate the underground irrigational system with modern approach.

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Ethnic Composition in Central Asia
An Interreligious Perspective

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Abstract
Central Asia is composed of a mottled mosaic of different groups consisting of well over 100 million people. At least 40 distinct cultural groupings have been identified by anthropologists. The population density of Central Asia varies widely, from two people per square kilometre (in parts of Tajikistan) to over 200 people per square kilometre in the Fergana valley of Uzbekistan. Central Asia has some of the highest birth-rates in the world, leading to an average age of the overall population that is under 18 years of age. Many of the Central Asians still speak Russian and most also speak one of the various languages sharing a linguistic heritage with Turkish. Many of these Turkic languages, though distinct, can be partially understood by those speaking a different dialect. Since Central Asian Republics declared their independence at the end of 1991, ethnic harmony has been seen as the most fundamental condition for political stability in all five newly independent multi-ethnic Central Asian states. Intercultural harmony, in history, has not always been promoted as a desirable end among Central Asian political and religious leaders. The years of Soviet rule saw the intentional implementation of policies that served to divide and conquer local populations in order to keep them subjected to Soviet political domination. With the result they managed to create a mosaic of ethnic diversity throughout Central Asia so as to prevent any sort of political cohesiveness among ethnic groups that could pose a threat to the Soviet regime. In this paper, suggestions are provided to overcome inter-ethnic conflicts and promote inter-ethnic dialogue among various ethnicities belonging to different faiths in Central Asia.

Keywords
Central Asian Republics, Ethnic Diversity, Inter-Ethnic Conflict, Inter-Ethnic Harmony, Inter-Faith Dialogue.

Introduction

All five Central Asian states are multi-ethnic. The number of ethnic groups in any Central Asian state ranges from several dozen to more than one hundred. Kazakhstan, for example, boasts more than one hundred different ethnic groups. The dominant ethnic groups in Central Asia are the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz's, the Tajiks and the Turkmens. However, the Russians account for large proportion of the population.

In four out of five Central Asian Republics, the Russian are closely behind at 37.8 percent. In Kyrgyzstan, the population consists of more than eighty ethnic groups. The relative percentage of the Kyrgyz's and the Russian is respectively 52.4% and 21.5%. Of all ethnic groups in Uzbekistan, the Uzbeks form 71.4%. The Russians, at 8.3% are still the second largest ethnic group there. In Turkmenistan, there are 72% of Turkmens and 9.5% of Russians. In Tajikistan Russians accounted for 7.6% of the population in 1991, the third largest ethnic group behind the Tajiks and Uzbeks.[1] The complicated composition of ethnic groups in the Central Asian population, and, in particular, the high percentage of Russians in Central Asians, is a direct result of the Czarist and the Soviet policies towards ethnic minorities and towards Russian migration in Central Asia.

The highly complicated ethnic composition and the potential for ethnic strife in Central Asia were very much on the mind of leaders of the Central Asian states at and after independence. These leaders clearly realized that political and social stability and the efforts at nation building of their newly independent states depended on whether they could properly handle the Soviet legacy of inter-ethnic conflict and deal effectively with new problems in relationships between ethnic groups.[2] The ethnic circumstances in Central Asia are further made intricate by religion. Although, Islam is dominant in the region, other religions also have considerable following. The five titular nationalities-the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz's, the Turkmens and the Tajiks, as well as the Tatars and the Uyghur's-are Muslims. Among the Muslims, however, there is sectarian strife. The confrontation between revolutionary Muslim elements and Islamic fundamentalism is a good example of this conflict. Of the minor religions in the region, Orthodox Christianity has many adherents among the Russians, the Belarusians and the Ukrainians. Christianity finds many disciples among the Germans and Buddhism among the Koreans. In Kazakhstan, for example, in addition to 60% of Muslims, there are the Orthodox, the Protestants, the Catholics and the Buddhists. Potentially, religion is a divisive issue in the relationship between ethnic groups.[3] The importance of religion in the development of relationships between ethnic groups in the region is underlined by the rising influence of Islam in the political, economic and social life of the newly independent states of Central Asia in recent years. Contemporary Central Asia is the result of a "genuine merging marked by widespread bilingualism and cultural hybridization".[4]Persians, Turks, Russians,

Germans, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen, and Kazakhs meet together in a splashing mixture of colour, smell, and sound that includes young and old, modern and ancient, religious and secular, and nomadic and urban and also have peppered their own unique pockets of culture in Central Asia, creating an ever-changing mosaic of values, perspectives, assumptions and intercultural understandings.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan is Central Asia's largest and potentially richest country. Like all other Central Asian states, it emerged as an independent state when the Soviet Union collapsed in December 1991. It borders Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, and the Caspian Sea. Although Kazakhstan is a young state that emerged only during the Soviet era, the Kazakhs have lived in Central Asia for centuries.[5] Kazakhstan's history is marked by long periods of internal armed conflict. The first evidence of human civilization in Kazakhstan is that of nomads, traced back to the first millennium BC; the Turkic nomads appeared several centuries later. Overtime, Kazakhstan's rich, vast steppes have attracted many large and small empires, including those led by *Attilia*, *Genghis Khan*, and *Timur*, that conquered and ruled it completely or partially in the case of Mongols, for a few centuries.[6] Kazakhstan became a Soviet republic in 1936, and Soviet collectivization led to the forcible settlement of these nomadic people- a devastating disruption for the social cohesion of the local culture. The Soviets dissolved Kazakh leadership structures, break up migratory routes, and eliminated historical tribal identities. Nomadic Kazakhs were forced to settle and become landless peasants.[7] Kazakhstan lived in a state of perpetual crisis beginning with the famines of 1921 and 1922 and lasting throughout the period of the Second World War. During the years of famine at least one million Kazakhs slowly starved to death as a result of failed government economic policies and social chaos. The unsteady nature of this time was routine into a continual downward spiral, which saw one manmade disaster after another. In 1926, there were about four million Kazakhs, and that number dropped to under three million by 1939.[8]

Kazakhstan, like other present-day Central Asian countries, was a component of the multi-ethnic khanates (Central Asian states) before their incorporation into the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century. These khanates did not correspond to the current five Central Asian

states in terms of number, name, size, population, or ethnic makeup. Before their annexation by the Russian empire, the khanates were in conflict with each other, with the remnants of the Mongol empire, with other Central Asian khanates based in southern Central Asia (e.g., Samarkand, Bukhara, and khiva), and with the regional powers (Iran and Russia).[9] Kazakhstan's political system was more tolerant of dissent and more democratic in the first decade of its independence, mainly because of the absence of any major source of internal conflict in the form of radical or extremist political groups and movements. Such tolerance was also needed partly to keep the multi-ethnic country together. Because ethnic minorities accounted for about 60 percent of the country, and the ethnic Kazakhs were clearly in minority, efforts to establish an authoritarian system of government would probably have contributed to social unrest and secessionist groups or movements, especially because ethnic Russians accounted for 40 percent of the population and were concentrated mainly in the north of Kazakhstan, bordering Russia.[10]

Kazakhstan is a country whose future depends on the demographics of its ethnic composition. In 1989, ethnic Russians represented 38 percent of the Kazakh population and the remaining 20 percent were divided between Germans, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, and others. In 1996, while the actual number of Russians did not decline from 6.22 million, their share of the population decreased to 35 percent. Germans and Ukrainians also saw their share decline while the Uzbeks population remained fairly stable. The Kazakh's share of the population shot up to 46 percent as a result of nationalistic aspirations from the part of government that subsidizes high fertility rates. The Kazakh situation is a fragile one, but only because of the numbers of its ethnic composition but also because of their locations. Russians and Kazakhs are two significant ethnic groups with very different socio-cultural makeup and inspirations who live separately from each other and are worlds apart in case of religion and faith.

Tradition of tolerance and secularism turned a norm during Soviet trade which continues till date. The government does not permit religious education in public schools.[11] According to the country's 2009 national census, approximately 65% (or 10.5 million) of Kazakhstan's 16.4 million population identify themselves as Muslims.[12] As per 2018 population census, 70% of people in Kazakhstan are Muslims and 26% are Christians out of total population of 18.4 million.[13] The overall

majority of the Muslim population is Sunni, of the Hanafi School. The highest concentration of practicing Muslims is located in Kazakhstan's southern region, bordering Uzbekistan. As in neighbouring states, the number of mosques, churches, and synagogues has grown since the independence. However, the population is somewhat concerned with minority ("non-traditional") religious groups that proselytize.

In 2009, there were 2308 registered mosques affiliated with the Spiritual Association of Muslims of Kazakhstan (SAMK), and around 70 independent mosques.[14] SAMK is a national organization with close ties to government, which sometimes pressures unaffiliated imams and congregations to affiliate and make their practices more mainstream. It has powerful influence over the practice of Islam in the former Soviet republic, not only limited to licensing and construction of mosques, but carrying out background checks on imams and the coordination of hajj travels, which involves authorization of travel agencies to provide travel services to Muslim pilgrims bound for Saudi Arabia.[15]

Central Asia's strongest Christian communities are in Kazakhstan. Protestantism is growing at a rapid rate, with approximately 6000 new Kazakh speaking Pentecostal and Baptist Protestants resident within the country by 2005. Sometimes, to avoid trouble, young Kazakh Protestant converts choose to call themselves followers of the *Messiah* instead of the term Christian. Other forms of Protestantism have been shrinking in the region. There were 960000 German-speaking Lutherans in Kazakhstan in 1992 but emigration to Russia and Europe radically reduced that number to 350000 by 1997.[16] Christianity is seeing a rebirth among the 10 million ethnic Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, just a decade after the collapse of the U.S.S.R.'s 70-years old Communist system. The number of ethnic Kazakh Christians has grown fewer from fever than 6000 since the fall of Communism in 1991, according to Christian workers at a recent gathering in Kazakhstan. The mostly Muslim Kazakhs live within the Central Asian country of Kazakhstan, a former Soviet Republic that lies between Russia and China. Although, Christianity has been n the region for centuries, it has not taken hold among ethnic Kazakhs since the days of the fifth-century Nestorian Church, but now Christianity is on the rise.[17]

Kazakhstan's Roman Catholic community has experienced steady growth since the fall of the Soviet Union. Most young converts to Catholicism are native German speakers from the predominantly German and catholic parish of St. Teresa in and around the city of

Pavlodar. The Roman Catholic apostolic administration of Kazakhstan even publishes a monthly journal for Catholics called *credo*. Catholics first came to the region when Stalin forced their ancestors to flee from the Volga and the Ukraine.[18] The Russian Orthodox Church remains the strongest Christian presence in Kazakhstan. The Orthodox Church confines its efforts mostly to Kazakhstan's Russian or Ukrainian – speaking population. Both the Kazakh government and the local Russian Orthodox Church have worked hard to protect a number of beautiful and ancient Churches, including one Church in Almaty held together without a single nail. The Russian Orthodox Church has little recently in terms of proselytism among Muslim communities.[19]

Although Kazakhs pride themselves on being self-sufficient and independent, the problems that they face will be greatly eased when other nations provide vital assistance. New challenges demand new solutions, capital, and modern technology. Kazakhstan is searching for a cohesive national identity and the proper development of its vast potential. The government has advanced interfaith dialogue, outlining a program for ensuring religious freedom and improvement of relations between the government and religions between 2007 and 2009.[20] The program delineates plans for "increasing the stability of the religious situation" and preventing religious extremism through education and government sponsored media inserts. In addition, the program criticizes increasingly active "non-traditional religious groups", for causing interfaith tension and ignoring existing traditions.[21] In 2008, Kazakh law enforcement bodies held conferences, round tables and seminars with the participation of authoritative state officials and religious leaders for students and pupils on preventing religious extremism. The program likewise calls for new legislation to augment control over missionaries and the distribution of religious information.[22] Authorities have also placed restrictions on the activities of ethnic and religious-based organizations under the pretext of maintaining peace and inter-ethnic harmony. The ethnic constituency of Kazakhstan with religious overtures will be a key player in the country's future stability.

Upon the initiative of the Kazakhstan President, Mr. Nazarbayev N., the city of Astana witnessed various Congresses of World and Traditional Religious Leaders. These Congresses demonstrated not only the right direction of the country's external policy but also proved the effectiveness of the unique Kazakhstani model of inter-confessional collaboration and strengthening the relationship between the confessions

and contribute to the global dialogue of civilizations. The Kazakhstani model of inter-relations between the state and religious organizations is based on democratic principles respecting the believer's rights and freedoms, on equality of public and religious interests, partnership and strive for mutual understanding. In modern realities of worldwide globalization meeting of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions creates wide range of prospects and opportunities for mutual cooperation and promotes love, tolerance and peace.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is one of the two smallest and poorest Central Asian countries (the other is Tajikistan). Kyrgyzstan as it is currently bounded geographically emerged only recently, during the soviet era, as a result of the division of Central Asia into five states, each with a dominant ethnic group. As was the case throughout Turkic Central Asia, the Kyrgyz are not the original inhabitants of current Kyrgyzstan, for different Iranian peoples settled in Central Asia about two millennia before the migration of inner Asia's Turkic tribes to the region.[23] The term Kyrgyz first appears in Muslim sources dating from the tenth century and is used in reference to a tribal group that conquered southern Kazakhstan.[24] Earlier historical records sometimes fail to make a distinction between the Kyrgyz and the Kazakhs.[25] This might have been the case when the term was used by Chinese warriors in the seventh and eight centuries when they staged raids in the fertile farmlands of modern-day Uzbekistan. An army of *Uigher* western Chinese attempted other incursions into the area but they were defeated by local warriors in 840 CE. This cemented the rule of the Kyrgyz in all the lands between the *Yenisei*- and *Orkhon* rivers.

The Kyrgyz tribes fought many wars with the Uzbeks to regain independence, including four major ones in the period 1845-1873. Russia began to annex the region in 1864 and by 1876 had gained complete control. The Russian presence, however, did not drastically affect the nomadic traditions of the local population. In 1916, the year Russia was active in the First World War, the Czar imposed a forced migration on the Kyrgyz. The Bolshevik revolution ended the tsarist rule in Kyrgyzstan, but it did not bring independence for the Kyrgyz. The soviet regime had extended its control to Kyrgyzstan by 1919, at that time Kyrgyzstan was renamed the Kara Kyrgyz Autonomous region.[26] Kyrgyzstan seems to lurch from crisis to crisis. There has been worsening political violence, prison revolts, a rise in crime, and a host of

economic problems that have led to labor strikes. In addition to internal struggles, the country faces deep intercultural problems because of the wide range of differing cultures that live within its borders. Intercultural tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities are particularly acute. There are also problems between Muslims both Kyrgyz and Uzbek and those ethnic Germans and Russians who have chosen to stay in the country. Akayev was criticized by both his nationalist and Islamist political opponents for being too lenient and responsive to the requests of these local German and Russian communities whom these militant forces were hoping would eventually respond to the pressure that they were imposing on them to leave the country altogether. This argument was instrumental in Akayev's eventual ouster from power. The goal of the nationalists who eventually gained control was a more homogenous national population.[27]

Like their forefathers, the Kyrgyz share a passionate devotion for a life of independence and nomadic freedom. The traditions of the migratory Kyrgyz culture have emphasized an aversion for imposed authoritative social structures. Each man ruled his own domain and referred to himself and other men as the *kaisak* or the "brave ones". Many values and customs have remained unchanged in this part of world. The Kyrgyz speak a Turkic language that is almost identical to Kazakh.[28] This correlation has led some to conclude mistakenly that the Kyrgyz are basically Kazakhs. There are over 5.1 million Kyrgyz, with 3.3 million of these in Kyrgyzstan and the remaining live mostly in either China or Kazakhstan. The population is young, with over 30 percent under 14 years of age; the medium age is 23.6years.[29]

Religion has been an influential factor in the world of Kyrgyz. Long before Islam, shamanism, with clear traces to Siberian animist practices, flourished in the area. These shamanistic rituals provided ceremonies for communicating with demonic powers or departed ancestors who might be able to assist people in their present circumstances or in the life hereafter.[30] Adherents of shamanism lived in a world brimming with super natural powers and departed souls and found in these beliefs, along with Islam, ways to help them grapple with their stressful daily lives. The establishment of Kyrgyzstan as an independent state in 1991, and the creation of a new constitution enshrining religious freedoms within it, led to a new focus upon Islam in Kyrgyz society. In the years that followed, the construction of mosques and religious schools (madrassas) mushroomed, fueled by aid from turkey, Egypt, Saudi

Arabia and other countries in the Muslim world. The number of Kyrgyz students in Islamic schools surged. National religious traditions and holidays were reinstated after being abolished during the soviet era.[31]

Kyrgyzstan's religious revival attracted international attention. Missionaries from Muslim countries became involved in local religious activities and a great deal of religious Islamic literature was published and imported. Clergy and internationally known theologians began to educate local communities on religious matters, taking into account the historical traditions and mentality of local people. This, however, has by and large not been radical. The majority of Kyrgyz Muslims do not support the activities of religious extremist organizations, including HTI (Hizb-ut-tahrir al Islami). Many citizens understand the organization's origins, its foreign links, and its ultimate goal of creating a global Islamic caliphate, and reject it for those reasons. Hizb-ut-tahrir's support comes mainly from the disadvantaged sectors of the population.

Christianity has a long history among the Kyrgyz, with the Nestorians being the first Christians that the Kyrgyz encountered. A gravestone near Bishkek with Nestorian marking dates to the seventh century. Christians flooded into the region again during Stalin's rule and the Second World War when the tyrant exiled thousands of poor Russians, and later Germans to Kyrgyz lands. Many of these Russians were orthodox, Ukrainians were catholic, and Germans were Lutherans. Besides, there were a host of smaller groups such as Baptists, Pentecostals, and Mennonites. Many of these transplanted Germans and Russians became uneasy about living in Central Asia after the fall of the Soviet Union because they feared that they would be forced to become Muslims or would be treated with discrimination by their Muslim neighbours. These fears resulted in large number of Russian, Ukrainians, and German Christians emigrating to Russia and the west. Those who remained (in 2006 about 123500 or 2.4 percent of the population) have not experienced any major difficulties with their neighbours.[32]

Kyrgyzstan's law on religion contains no provisions that are aimed at discriminating against any particular religious group. Christians in Kyrgyzstan are not required to register their churches with the government and few have complained about any significant problems. One exception was the Pentecostal church of Jesus Christ, which was threatened with closure and a substantial fire in 2004. This church claims around 10000 members and is the best-attended protestant

church in Kyrgyzstan.[33] The Catholic Church is relatively strong in Kyrgyzstan, with a national cathedral in Bishkek and about 40 small parishes scattered throughout the country. Protestant missionaries come to Kyrgyzstan from Europe and North America, trying to encourage local Russian and German Christians to resist the temptation to leave as well as assisting them in their church growth and pastoral care efforts. Interfaith issues are becoming particularly visible in Kyrgyzstan because the nation is becoming increasingly culturally stratified. The southern half of the country is more strongly Islamic while the Christians in the north are gaining increasing political and economic control. This trend has gained the attention of Islamic political movements, who are clamouring for a greater degree of Islamization. Interfaith issues are becoming particularly visible in Kyrgyzstan because the nation is becoming increasingly culturally stratified. The southern half of the country is more strongly Islamic while the Christians in the north are gaining increasing political and economic control. This trend has gained the attention of Islamic political movements, who are clamouring for a greater degree of Islamization.

Tajikistan

The term *Tajik* was first used by Russians and others to generally refer to settled people and was also used as a synonym for Arab to describe the distinctive pastoralist nature of these people. Thrower conjectures that "their name is derived from the name of an Arab tribe, the '*taiy*', under whom they sort protection during the Arab invasion of the region in the 7th and 8th centuries".[34] Tajiks were also referred to as *sarts*, and are of Persian ancestry with a language very similar to the Dari spoken in Iran. Seven million people live in the country while another five million Tajiks live outside the republic.[35] The Tajik population has increased dramatically (45 percent) since national independence in 1991. This surging growth rate is one of the highest in Central Asia. The population of Tajikistan is increasingly young, with almost 40 percent of them under the age of 14 and less than 5 percent over the age of 65.[36]

Tajikistan faces a host of issues relating to its mix of urban and rural villages (67 percent of the population) spread out across its 143000 square kilometres. These villages, along rivers, or in the high mountain ranges, often consist of 200 to 500 single family homes. Tajik villages (unlike Kazakh or Kyrgyz settlements) are inhabited by farmers who cultivate wheat and other crops such as melons, apricots, cherries,

apples, grapes, plums, or figs. There are some shepherds also.. Because of Tajikistan's mountainous terrain, however, less than 6 percent of all the land in the country is arable. Tajikistan ranks along with its neighbour Kyrgyzstan as one of the smallest and poorest Central Asian countries. This small but mountainous Central Asian state was host to human settlements as early as 3000 BC. The Tajiks, descendents of Iranian peoples whose presence in the area was first recorded about 500 BC, were members of the ancient kingdom of Bactria and part of the Achaemenid Persian Empire before its defeat by the armies of Alexander the Macedonian. Unlike their nomadic, Turkic speaking neighbours the Tajiks became sedentary early on and spoke a Persian language.[37] Present-day Tajikistan was established as the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, as part of the newly formed Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, in the fall of 1924. Tajikistan became a full member of the Soviet Union and the seventh union republic in 1929. Repressive campaigns in the 1930s purged ethnic Tajiks from the ranks of local republican government in favour of ethnic Russian settlers.

Although the government declared sovereignty in 1990 and created an executive presidency, the communist leadership was anxious to preserve its ties to the Soviet Union and did not protest the failed Moscow coup attempt of August 1991. During mass demonstration after the coup, Tajikistan declared its independence in September 1991, and the Supreme Soviet chairperson, Kadreddin Aslonov, resigned, to be succeeded by communist party of Tajikistan first secretary Rakhmov Nabiyev, who was elected the first president of independent of Tajikistan in November 1991.[38] The newly independent Tajikistan suffered from a devastating civil war that began in 1992, precipitated by a power struggle between various clans. A year into the conflict, president Nabiyev was forced to resign, and Imomali Rahmon (then known as Imomali Rahmonov) was appointed chairperson of the Supreme Soviet, effectively taking control of the government. Violence between the Rahmon government and opposition forces continued, especially after the formation of the united Tajik opposition (UTO) in June 1993. A 1997 peace settlement between the government and the united Tajik opposition that formally ended the five year civil war. the settlement included provisions that called for the legalization of opposition political parties and the integration of UTO members into government positions.[39]

Islam's powerful role in Tajik society is partly linked to the strong traditionalism of society. Tajik law forbids the Islamic clergy from joining a political party or using the mosques for political propaganda. Since late 1990's Hizb-ut-tahrir has been the fastest-growing organization in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. At first it did not attract a great deal of attention because it did not advocate violence as apolitical means. Since then leader has warned several times that Hizb-ut-tahrir is a serious threat both to the IRP and Tajikistan. The organization was declared illegal in Tajikistan in 2001. It was included in the list of terrorist organizations presented by the Russian federal security service in February 2003.[40]

Christianity came to the Tajik people early with the presence of Nestorian Christian missionaries in their midst as early as the fifth century. Today, only a scattered handful of Christian communities remain in the country because many Tajik Christians have left the country to go to Europe or Russia.[41] One reason why there are fewer Christians in Tajikistan springs from the fact that it was one of the least Russified of the Central Asian Republics. Russian rule did not arrive in the region until the 1860s, and the country was not fully incorporated into the Soviet Union until 1925. At the beginning of the twenty-first century the number of citizens of Tajikistan who spoke Russian probably numbered at only about 1 percent of the population. Those Russian and German Christian churches that do exist are primarily either in the capital city of Dushanbe or along the border. Ethno-centric attitudes from both Tajik Muslims and there Russian and German Christians have meant that interaction has been kept to minimum.[42] Protestants from North America and Europe have been active in Tajikistan. Missionaries from operation mobilization, youth with a mission, campus crusade for Christ, and other protestant groups have been active in a number of ways, including creating radio programming in the Tajik language, showing the "Jesus film", and doing dramatic and musical programs.[43] Christian human rights monitoring organizations such as Open Doors International and the Voice of the Martyrs have cited Tajikistan's government for being repressive to members of the country's fledgling Christian minority.

In the post-soviet Central Asia, national minorities have come under pressure from the state authorities, which represent the ethnic majority and its interests. This process has not yet gone far in Tajikistan but it is on its way. Inter governmental tensions between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan adds to the process on minority groups in these countries. As

a result, minorities complain that their rights are violated, for example, Tajiks in Uzbekistan and Uzbek in Tajikistan complain that they have no access to books in their own language or to schools that teach in their own language.[44]

The first five years of the new republic saw a bitter civil war, but there have been no major flare-ups or security incidents in recent years. The Tajik civil war, however, continues to have a lingering effect because problems set in motion at that time severely damaged the economic infrastructure and disrupted agricultural production. Since 1994, Emomali Rahmonov (of the dominating political Democratic party of Tajikistan, the PDPT) has been the chief of state based in Dushanbe while holding a number of different titles.[45]Tajikistan held another election for president in 2006. One issue that was prominent in that election was the way that the country relates to its neighbours. Some are calling for Tajikistan to join the NATO partnerships for peace program, which offers significant economic benefits as well as stronger links with the west while others are calling for closer ties with various Islamic nations. While the situation seems to become more stable as time goes on, the social and political future of Tajikistan is anything but certain.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan has a long and rich history enriched by interactions with the ancient civilizations of India, Iran (Persia), and the Middle East. The land's cultivation by pre-historic cultures dates back to 500 BC, and the remains of urban settlements have been traced to the Bronze Age. From the third century BC to the fourth century AD, Turkmenistan was part of the powerful Iranian (Persian) kingdom of Parthia, which was a formidable opponent of the Roman Empire. The land came under Arab domination in the eight century. The modern-day Turkmens are descents of nomadic Turkic tribes known as the Oghuz, which migrated to the land from the southern Siberia and northern Mongolia around the ninth century.[46] Turkmenistan and the rest of Central Asia have been of interest to many regional and non-regional peoples over the last few thousand years. In one form or another, these peoples affected the pace of events in Central Asia as they conquered the Turkmens land and settled there during their eastward or westward migrations. Within this context, the Iranians, the Turkic tribes, and the Russians have been especially noteworthy, affecting the current situation to varying

degrees. Ties between the Central Asians and the occupying people have been forged over time, including historical, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, economic, industrial, and military/security ones.[47] However, while an ethnic conflict is not expected, there are other sources of preoccupation in the constitution. For example, the law of freedom of religion also gives the government the exclusive right to decide who may teach religious subjects. All laws relating to religious freedoms or to other civil and political rights stipulate and that their exercise is permitted only for so long as they do not infringe on public safety and order. Furthermore, opposition forces have been brutally repressed under the pretext of preventing inter-ethnic tensions.[48]

Saparmurad Niyazev, "Turkmanbashi" has become the sole leader despite the fact that the country is officially a presidential republic. Niyazov argues that the development of a cult of personality in Turkmenistan is necessary for the development of the country and that unless there was such governance, the country would be in chaos. President Niyazov argues that Turkmenistan needs at least another ten years to settle its ethnic composition and that, during that time; the Turkmen identity should develop but that the non-Turkmen should also be able to access the same rights and opportunities. Despite the fact that Turkmenistan has gone further than any other Central Asian state by introducing dual-citizenship, the concerns of the non-Turkmen still prevail. Turkmens are "the most homogenous of all Turkic people living in Central Asia".[49] They are sometimes referred to as the "Kuwaitis" of Central Asia because of their industrious work ethic as entrepreneurship and for their work in the construction industry. Turkmen today find themselves at a social and political crossroads with the elders of their community being called upon to make key decisions about how to respond to a host of political and economic factors in a changing world. In one significant decision that will affect the future, the government of Turkmenistan looked to neighboring Turkey, and away from Russia, when it decided to change its alphabet from the Cyrillic to the Latin script.[50]

In 2007, Turkmenistan saw President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov come to power after the long rule of Saparmurat Niyazev who died in the same year. The firm political apparatus that Niyazev built, the democratic party of Turkmenistan, retains absolute control over the government (modified after a tribal assembly or shura) [51] and has no tolerance for any political dissent. It is that time, after coming to power,

president Berdimuhamedov pardoned a number of religious and political prisoners and this has given observers some cause for hope. Any voice raised in opposition is attacked as treasonous against the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan. During Niyazov's 15-years totalitarian rule there were no elections. Freedom of speech or religious freedom was denied. Niyazov tried to root state authority in cultural terms instead of relying on the role of Islam to better his authority.

It is undeniable that the aggressive anti-religious campaign launched by the soviet authorities placed even greater distance between Central Asian Islam and Islam practiced in "mainstream" Muslim countries in the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia or Africa, Islamic doctrine had never taken as firm root in Turkmenistan as it had in other Muslim areas, including the older, sedentary territories of Central Asia. Well before the Bolshevik Revolution, the Turkmen, like other nomadic peoples, preferred to pray in private rather than visit a mosque.[52] A mobile lifestyle necessarily favoured a non-scriptural, popular version of Islam while naturally curtailing the presence of professional clergy. As the expert Adrienne Edger noted, any man who could read and recite prayers was given the title of mullah or cleric.[53] Particularly in the nomadic regions, teachers of Sufi orders, or Ishans, played a more influential role than the ulama (Muslim scholars). The independent Turkmen tribes lacked Muslim *kadis* who judged in accordance with Islamic law, with the result that *shria* only held sway in the sphere of family law, and was implemented by mullahs at birth, circumcision, marriage and funeral ceremonies.[54] In the twenty-first century, Turkmenis continue to be governed less by Islamic law than by tribal customary law or *adat*, which has been passed down for many centuries. As the majority of Turkmenis do not practice their religion in a formal or institutional way, mosque remain conspicuously empty, including Central Asia's largest and grandest mosque, the Turkmenbashi Ruhy mosque in former President Niyazov's hometown of Gypjak, which is only visited by a significant number of male worshippers on Fridays.

Christianity first came to the Turkmenistan with the efforts of Nestorian missionaries. Since their arrival very few organized mission efforts focused on Turkmenistan. Ethnic Russians, about 10 percent of the population, attend Russian orthodox services. In 2005, the country had only a handful of Protestant churches with only a few hundred members remaining in each congregation.[55] Protestant missionaries have turned a radio programming and literature publication in the promotion

of their faith. Some missionaries have come to Turkmenistan either working in business or as foreign language teachers as a way to secure their residence visas. This is also done to appear less threatening to Turkmen citizens who might not otherwise understand why a European or North American would chose to live in their country. There are also missionaries working on the translation of the Bible into Turkmen because, an updated and completed Bible in the Turkmen language does not exist. Christians in Turkmenistan of all denominations have faced a host of problems since the fall of the Soviet Union. It may have the harshest religious policy in Central Asia today. All religious organizations have to be registered with the government, but only the applications of Muslims and Russian orthodox churches have been granted. This situation obligates Protestant churches to operate illegally and face closure, as was the case at the Turkmenabad Baptist church. The Ashkhabad Baptist Church, which had registered under the former Soviet Union, lost its legal status in 1997.[56] Members of other churches have been threatened with imprisonment and closure of their facilities.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan is the most populous and militarily the strongest country of Central Asia, as well as the most industrialized regional country, along with Kazakhstan. As a Turkic ethnic group, the Uzbeks are fairly recent denizens of the land now known as Uzbekistan, whose boundaries do not correspond to those of any Central Asian Khanate before the Uzbek's forcible integration into Russia.[57] The Republic of Uzbekistan has about 27 million people, two-thirds of whom live in rural villages.[58] The term *Uzbek* was applied generally to Turkic nomads of Central Asia and is a relatively recent invention. Previously, those who lived in the area were referred to primarily in terms of their proximity to either the emirate of Samarkand or Bukhara. Because of the artificiality of this label, Bennigsen states that Uzbekistan is "the most artificial of all Central Asian nations".[59] The Soviet Union established the Socialist republic of Uzbekistan in 1924, but many of the retrogressive forces that had previously ruled were allowed to continue unabated.

Modern Uzbekistan has been described as one of the world's most self-destructively repressive regimes. Intercultural tensions lead the list of internal problems the country faces because bitter histories between various groups have often simmered into serious social disharmony. In the fall of 1990, scores of Kyrgyz were killed by Uzbeks in the city

of Osh. Violent conflict also raged between the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities in Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan. Another horrid series of events transpired in 1989 when brutal clashes between Uzbeks and Meshketian Turks forced many people to leave their homes, fleeing for their lives. People were rounded up, killed, and mutilated for no other reason than being a Meshketian Turk. Hyman refers to these volcanic incidents as "virtual pogrom …that left more than 200 Turks murdered with appalling savagery and many more wounded with the authorities forced to airlift about 15000 of the remaining Mishketian Turks out of republic".[60]The horrific scars of this continue to see the deeply within the heart of Uzbekistan.

Lingering expression of ethnic division between the various Uzbek and Tajik communities of southern Uzbekistan are also apparent. Uzbek chauvinism is a major concern, reflected in the fact that Uzbekistan continues to have simmering border disputes with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It seems that Uzbekistan feels it should be the dominant power in the region and this arrogance is irksome to its neighbours. Burghat writes that Kazakhstan "openly resents their treatment as country cousins".[61] Many of the populations of Uzbekistan's neighbours more freely across the nations, borders, and because of this interplay, Uzbekistan's president, Late Islam Karimov, has warned that ethnic rivalries could explode again at any time and throw the country into chaos. It is clear; however, that president Karimov is seeking to benefit from these intercultural tensions and the perception of potential dangers for his own political advantage.

Uzbekistan is potentially without any democratic framework and has been ruled by authoritarian strongman: president Islam Abduganievich Karimov. Beginning in 1992, Karimov has ruled the country for the most of the part. Karimov has tried to link his own success to the progress of the nation and the motto "Uzbekistan, the great state of the future" is predominantly displayed throughout the country. While Karimov, "lauded the 1992 constitution as enshrining most principles of the international Declaration of Human Rights, in practice these principles remain unrealized".[62] It has not been unusual for Karimov to institute a law and then flaunt its enforcement with blatant violations. For example, the government instituted a mandate from the president stating that it would be illegal to erect. Although the country is adamant that the judicial and local systems continue to be gradually liberalized, Uzbekistan still lacks an independent judicial system.[63]

About 88 percent of the population belong to Sunni sect of Islam. Islam plays a large role in nearly every facet of their society, and Uzbeks have been described by some as the "most religious of all Central Asian Muslims".[64] It is also the case that many of the imams and leading muftis of other Central Asian republics are Uzbek and their religious authority and influence can be seen throughout the region. One can talk in Uzbekistan about unambiguous boundaries between faith and political ambitions. This is because of the cherished faith of Islam comprehensively touches every area of a believer's life and unmistakably affects every aspect of Uzbek culture.

Because Islam is so highly esteemed in Uzbekistan it has recently been used by opponents of the government to press their case. Some Uzbeks have been drawn into supporting militant Islamist political organisations, which have challenged Karimov's role on the basis of its unwillingness to support the initiation of Islamic shariah law. The political expressions of Islam in Uzbekistan are more visible than in any other Central Asian nation, with the exception of Tajikistan. Missionary work and Islamic influences from outside of the region have been the major reason these movements have grown. For example, shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, one of the muftis (an honorific title for a clerical leader) of Tashkent, Mohammad Sidiqi Mohammad Yusuf, went for further religious training in Libya, and other Muslim religious leaders have similarly received religious training in centres of intense Islamist radicalism. Probably the most active and belligerent Islamist area in Uzbekistan is the Fergana Valley that was framed in Islamist rhetoric served to strengthen their passionate Islamic resolve.

In terms of traditional Sunni Islam, the Tashkent Islamic institution is the largest Muslim educational academy in Central Asia. It is directed by a group of mullahs who oversee all of the (Hanafi) Sunni Islamic communities across Central Asia. Muslim education in Uzbekistan has sought to normalize and deepen the dedication of believers, but it has faced difficulties in doing this. One force working against widespread commitment to traditional Islamic practices is that devout rural Uzbeks often participate in local folk and mystical Sufi practices. At the same time, most traditional Muslim festivals are celebrated. Rural Islam in Uzbekistan is a complicated mix of Sunni ideas with pre-Islamic, seemingly incompatible, animistic shamanism. These patterns of mixing various religious cultural themes have been tolerated by Uzbek Muslims for centuries.[65]

The largest Christian denomination in Uzbekistan is the Russian Orthodox Church, which consists of about 9 percent of the population. Orthodox, catholic, and protestant Christians, while not experiencing the same degree of problems Christians have encountered in other Central Asian countries, have complained that potential converts to Christianity are facing strong religious persecution.[66] Uzbeks of Muslim ancestry who convert to Christianity experience severe cultural and relational isolation as a result of their decision. These interfaith tensions have resulted in many ethnic Uzbek Christians deciding to leave the country and move to European enclaves of security.

Issues of interfaith tensions have been heightened by the recent activities of protestant missionaries from Europe and North America and because of Muslim missionaries from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The Uzbek government enacted a series of legal ordinances in 1991 and 1992, which sought to limit external religious proselytization. Laws were also put in place to protect those who were vulnerable to outside pressures to become socially displaced from their native Islamic community. The government mandated that all children in the country should receive some Sunni Islamic religious education as a way to counteract the efforts of protestant and Islamist missionaries. Additional laws about religion were passed in May 1998, which restricted unauthorised Christian or Islamist activities with particular attention to efforts at proselytization. Sadly some of Uzbekistan's political leaders have tried to advance their careers by striving up hatred against Islamist and protestant missionaries. Specific legal standards have been developed and implemented, which favour the status of Hanafi Sunni Islam in Uzbekistan.[67] Other rulings have been authorized, which prohibit the distribution of non-Islamic religious literature. Christian churches are required to register with local government authorities, and there are instances where the government has cancelled registrations for some churches that have clear links with missionaries from outside the region.[68]

Protestant missionaries from Europe and North America have continued to be active in Uzbekistan. Many European and North Americans, such as the Swedish Pentecostal Ulf Eckman, have organised churches and sent missionaries into Uzbekistan to promote messages such as Echman's call that people can become healthy and prosperous by embracing his teachings about Christianity. Protestants from Europe and America have also developed radio programs and printed evangelical literature in the Uzbek language. In 2006, the Uzbek

Bible society (funded by Protestants outside the region) completed the translation of the Uzbek Bible. The Bible society claimed that this new edition was needed because almost 75 percent of the population speaks Uzbek.

Conclusion

Since their independence, all five Central Asian states have taken various measures to implement their ethnic policies to strive ethnic harmony. The following aspects are the main thrusts of their policies. Firstly, all leaders in Central Asian states attach great importance to ethnic unity and harmony in their nation-building efforts. Kazakhstan's president Nazarbayev, for example, has repeatedly emphasized on various occasions that ethnic harmony is vital for Kazakhstan's political, economic and social development as an independent state. Secondly, some republics have established special institutions in their endeavour to build and sustain the harmony between ethnic groups. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are two good examples. Kazakhstan's president Nazarbayev proposed, for example, that a national congress of national unity and ethnic harmony be convened every two years to discuss questions and concerns in ethnic relations. Thirdly, all Central Asian republics have made provision in their new constitutions for the protection of ethnic groups. No one should be discriminated against because of his/her birth, sex, race, nationality, language, religion, or political beliefs. The new constitutions also provide the basic protection of universal human rights. Some Central Asian states- for example, Kyrgyzstan have also promulgated by laws to protect the interests of minorities in these countries. Fourthly, Central Asian states have taken strict measures to limit the development of extreme nationalist organizations. The rise of extreme nationalism and related organizations spread quickly after the independence of five Central Asian Republics. This is perceived as detrimental to national unity and ethnic harmony in Central Asia by Central Asian governments. Fifthly, states are resolutely opposed to Islamic fundamentalism although Central Asian version of Islam plays an important role in social life of Central Asia. After independence, the revival of Islam and other religions in Central Asia has gathered momentum. While all constitutions of the Central Asian states have provisions to guarantee the freedom of religious beliefs of their own peoples, they also stipulate that Central Asian states are to be "democratic and secular states". Religions and religious activities

must be separated from state affairs. Islamic fundamentalism is seen by Central Asian leaders as undermining relations between ethnic groups and the political stability of the region. Lastly Central Asian states have taken steps to improve the relations among themselves and with Russia. This is also part of their effort to strengthen ethnic harmony and political stability. A good example of this is their collective approach to the question of common borders.

While the series of policies implemented by the Central Asian governments to strive for ethnic harmony and political stability have helped stabilize the political situation and mitigate the tensions between ethnic groups, serious problems still exist in interethnic relations in Central Asia. In April 1993, Nazarbayev acknowledged that problems in the relations between the Kazakhs and other ethnic groups were far from being solved. Current inter-ethnic discontent and tensions in Central Asia are indeed still intense. Three major problems challenge inter-ethnic harmony in Central Asia today. First, there is the rise of ethno-nationalism in Central Asia. The five titular nationalities- the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz's, the Tajiks and the Turkmens- had once been subjected to the oppression and enslavement of Czarist Russia and lived in an abyss of misery. The imposing revival of national culture after the independence of Central Asian states could be seen as an expression of an assertive ethno-nationalism. In Kazakhstan, for example, the spelling of the capital Almaty has been changed from the Russian to the Kazakh form. The name of the capital of Kyrgyzstan has also been replaced by a more historical name, Bishkek. Second, tensions and conflicts between ethnic groups are exacerbated by the stark disparity in their social and economic conditions. For historical reasons, ethnic groups tend to concentrate in one region of a given Central Asian republic. In both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, there is a clear divide between the North and the South. For example, in Tajikistan, the two economically underdeveloped and impoverished regions, Gorghan Tepeh in the south and Gorno-Badakhshan in the southeast, are mostly inhabited by Tajiks. Third, problems in inter-ethnic relationships in Central Asia are compounded by factors and elements beyond Central Asia. The Tajik civil war can be taken as a prime example.

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Labour Migration in Tajikistan
A Sociological Analysis of Internal and External Trends

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Abstract
Migration is an important event of 21st century and has changed the dynamics of many societies. Throughout human history migration has reflected people's yearning and attitudes to have a comfortable life. The growing scale of international migration is a response to the constant demand of workers in labour market of receiving countries. Migration has resulted in the economic and social development of developing countries. Labour migration is a boon to Central Asian economies and plays a conclusive role in keeping their economies afloat especially of Tajikistan as Tajikistan's current trajectory ,is not able to do enough to remediate its citizen's abrasive socio economic plight. Tajikistan is the origin country of labour migrants and agile participant of global migratory process. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the nature and potent of such an substantial migratory flow in order to assess its influence, together with other internal trends on the future of the country. Moreover, it is an attempt to comprehensively explain and analyze these trends of migratory flow.

Keywords
Central Asia, Tajikistan, Migration, Labour Migration, Emigration, Immigration.

Migration in Human Societies

Migration has been indispensable part of the human history since its very beginning. People have migrated across continents, civilizations and states or within their own boundaries. Thus, migration is a process of moving either across an international border, or within a state, encircling any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes, it includes refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people and economic migrants. Thus, migration has played a decisive role in shaping the world as we know it today. The phenomenon of migration has been imperative to human histories, cultures and civilizations and has played a obligatory role in proliferating different religions around the globe. For example Christianity, the Catholicism was scattered by the migration of Portuguese and Spanish during the 11th and 12th centuries.

To a large extent migration has shaped the demographic, social and political dynamics within pre modern civilizations and was a major medium of interaction between civilizations and their external environments. Patrick Manning distinguishes three types of migration labour migration, refugee migration and urbanisation. The phenomenon began in Britain in the late 18th century and spread around the world and continues to this day in many areas. Industrialisation encouraged migration wherever it appeared. The increasingly global economy globalised the labour market throughout the world. The Atlantic slave trade declined sharply after 1820 which gave rise to self bound contract labour migration from Europe and Asia to plantations (human migration). Overpopulations, open agricultural frontiers and rising industrial centres attracted voluntary migrants. Moreover, migration was remarkably made easier by new enhanced transportation techniques. Romantic nationalism also arose in 19th century and with it ethnocentrism. The great European industrial empires also arose. Both factors subscribe to the migration, as some countries favoured their own ethnicities over outsiders and other countries appeared to be considerably more welcoming for example the Russian empire associated with eastern orthodoxy, and restricted Jews who were not eastern orthodox to the pale of settlement and inflicted restrictions. Violence was also a problem. The US was fostered as a better location, "a golden land" where Jews could live more openly. Another effect of imperialism, colonialism led to the migration of some colonizing parties from home countries to the colonies and eventually the migration of the people from colonies to home countries (Hugh,1911). Transnational migration reached to the peak of three million migrants per year in the early 20th century Italy, Norway, Ireland and the Guangdong region of China were regions with especially high emigration rates during these years. These large migration flows affected the process of nation state formation in many ways. Migration restrictions have been developed as well Diaspora cultures and myths that reflect the importance of migration to the foundation of certain nations like the American melting pot. The transnational migration fell to a lower level from 1930s to the 1960s and then bounced back. Migration bounced back as two great wars in the first half of the century and many smaller wars throughout country caused millions more to flee the battlefields and seek refugee movements sometimes in camps but preferably in cities. Both refugee migration and labour migration subscribed to the third major type of

migration of the twentieth century i.e. urbanisation. Stimulation of human movements of the last century leads to the embellishment of existing cities, emergence of new cities and genesis of various forms of suburbs within reach of the cities. By 1990 half of human population nearly three billion persons had come to live in urban agglomerations of more than about 20,000 persons (Manning, 2005:157).

Patterns of Migration

Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries of Central Asia and is the most remittance dependent country. So, to overcome the crippling economy the young generation of Tajikistan migrated in large amounts following the breakup of U.S.S.R. in 1991. Labour Migration surged in 1994 and 1995 as a result of deprivation caused by the country's civil war and the slump of previous areas of employment during the transition to a market economy. No sector of economy has remained immune to it. The economic and demographic imbalances are the causes of expanding internal and external migration flows. The loss of subsidies and guaranteed access to markets are major contributors to the ensuing economic decline. There was a sharp decline in production across all sectors and resulted a severe decline in living standards of the populations.

Albeit, several significant social and economic steps have been taken since the signing of the peace accords in 1997, according to World Bank estimates the poverty rate in Tajikistan has dropped from over 72 percent in 2003 to just 40% percent in 2012 (CIA Fact Book, 2013). Indeed until recently the country remained the least developed in the world. According to human development report 2015, the HDI value of Tajikistan is 0.624 in 2014. That said, development initiative in Tajikistan continues to be hampered by the difficult terrain and paucity of infrastructure with majority of the populations even poorest as compared to other countries of the region. In this context, out migration has emerged as one of the sensible strategies for most of the families in order to sustain their lives. Precisely, temporary and seasonal labour migration from Tajikistan has become important factor in the economy of Tajikistan, with every 3rd household in the country having at least one member working abroad. In fact some scholars hold that the pioneers of mass labour migration from Central Asia have been the inhabitants of Tajikistan. Specifically, the labour migrants of Tajikistan are mainly (almost 97 percent) aligned towards the Russian Federation, where

they work in construction, trade, industry, agriculture and other sectors. The labour migration from Tajikistan has adapted the conditions of the labour market of the Russian Federation. The climatic condition explains the seasonal prevalence of lab our in Russia. The specificity of both the living conditions and the job of the seasonal laborers' at home in Tajikistan contribute to the formation of large scale seasonal migration. Low wages of the migrants in Russia is preventing the workers to bring their families with them. A Tajik labourer is always remembered when one needs to hire a person on less money for a temporary job at cheap rate (United Nations Report, 2003). In the eyes of Russians, Tajik is a person of second category, low status and deprived of rights, without any claim for a place in the social hierarchy, ready for any job, on the whole, anything for the sake of earnings. He is not even at the bottom of the social ladder (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

Such a deteriorated status of Tajik migrants in Russia has created a phobic complex, i.e. the Tajik migrants in Russia are accused of mass criminalization. Even Tajik migrants in Russia are frequently linked with the threat of "Islamic Extremism and Terrorism" however, it has not received any warm response from the common man (United Nations, 2009).

Despite all these complexities, labour migration has become a structural feature of the economic and social life of Tajikistan. Within the span of 2010 to 2014 the volume of remittances transferred by the labour migrants to Tajikistan increased from 2,305,826,625 to 3,853,539,565 US dollars (World Bank, 2015). According to World Bank indicators the volume of remittances in 2014 amounted to 41.7 percent of the GDP of the country that year which is a fall from previous year which was 49.6 percent of the GDP of the country. Thus, we see that labour migration is important for the socio economic development of Tajikistan and plays an important role in restraining the unemployment in Tajikistan.

Theoretical Perspective

Migration is effectively examined by using "push-pull" model by Everett Lee (1966). There are several 'push' factors responsible for Tajik labour migration. This model usually identifies various economic, political, environmental and demographic factors which are assumed to push migrants out of the places of origin and lure them to destination places. The fall of the Soviet Union caused economic crisis, while the civil war resulted in even more desolation and unemployment.

With a fragmented infrastructure, little industrial development, and scarcity of arable land, many families had little choice but to send at least one member out as a migrant labourer. The people of Tajikistan choose Russia as their host destination because migrants often reckon on previously established ties to countries, employers, and other migrants. This explains why such large numbers of labour migrants are found in a particular receiving country and often predominately within certain regions, cities or even communities. Financial costs of migration, which are usually very high, are cut down when one is able to move with the help of a community member already living in the receiving country. Furthermore, social costs are also reduced as the difficulties and stresses of trying to live and work in a foreign place are alleviated by the presence of one's fellow nationals. Tajik migrants were initially able to travel visa-free to Russia. Population of Russia is currently rapidly aging and declining and is estimated to fall in coming years. At the same time, the populations of the nearby Central Asian and Caucasus regions are expected to grow. This becomes the main reason for the decision to migrate. So, in addition to the many push factors in Tajikistan which help explain why this country experiences such enormously high rates of labour out-migration, there are also pull factors emerging from Russia which also explain labour migration from the whole region to Russia in particular.

In-Migration

In the early 1990s external shocks such as the disintegration of the U.S.S.R, the severance of the economic ties and civil war served as the catalyst for migration process. This process has led to the changes in the ethnic composition of Tajikistan. Between 1989 and 2010 censuses the share of Tajiks in the population structure grew from 62.3 to 84.25 percent whereas the share of Uzbeks dropped from 23.5% to 12.24% and the share of Russians decreased from 7.6% to 0.46%. A significant drop is also found in Kyrgyz 0.08% and Tatars 0.085% and others 2.17% (Ukrarians, Germans). The early 1990s were characterized by a high level of external non returning migration with changes in permanent residence. The outflow mostly affected industrialized cities where the share of non-indigenous people had been high. In general the migration level of the urban population during this period was several times higher than that of the rural population. The main migration trend of the early 1990s was replaced by labour migration by the late 1990s

and it has become key structural characteristic of economic and social life of Tajikistan in the past decades.

Table 3.1
Total, Natural and Migration Increase of the Population of Republic of Tajikistan, 1991-2007 (thousands of people)

Years	Total Increase Population at large	Natural Increase	Migration Increase
1991-1999	766.5	1373.8	-607.3
2000-2007	1246.5	1357.9	-111.4
	Urban population		
1991-1999	-50.6	291.6	-342.2
2000-2007	315.3	325.4	-10.1
	Rural population		
1991-1999	817.1	1082.23	-265.13
2000-2007	931.2	1032.5	-101.3

Source: National Human Development Report 2010, 95...Retrieved from https://www2.uef.fi/documents/1127814/1295956/countryreport-tajikistan-migration.pdf. Accessed on: 25/10/2015

The trends in labour migration can be understood by looking at the changing structure of population growth in Tajikistan (Table-3.1). Here, we can see that during 1991-1999 there was a kind of decrease in urban population (-50.6), it is because during this period because of de-industrialisation, there was de-urbanisation, that is people were moving from urban areas to rural areas so the people from urban areas out migrated to rural areas. The decreased living standards of the population and unemployment have contributed to the development of such migration modes as commuting (daily trips to work or study, mainly from rural to urban areas in search of jobs or to study) and temporary external labour migration abroad.

Labour migration has two main strands: internal – mainly from rural to urban areas; external – mainly to Russia (99.3% of migrants). Dushanbe attracts people from the region of republican subordination and Khatlon region. According to the 2009 labour force survey(LFS), the number of daily commuters travelling to Dushanbe is 46 800, compared with 4 200 travelling from Dushanbe to other districts. The

numbers of commuters are highest among the employed population of the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS) (15.2% of employed population) and Khatlon region (12.3%). In Gorno-Badakshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) the figure is 9.3%, and in 10 Sughd region 8.5%. Overall, there has been an increase in labour mobility. The volume of commuters increased between 2004 and 2009: 86 900 people were involved in commuting in 2004, while in 2009 the figure had increased to 200 900. Over 82% of these are men from rural areas (Statistical Yearbook of Tajikistan, 2011). The highest rate of external labour migration is from the DRS, at 15.1% of the population aged 15– 75 years, while the lowest rate is from Dushanbe city, at 6.4%; 13.5% (21 000) of the population aged 15–75 years from GBAO are migrants; 11.2% (160 700 people) from Sughd; and 9.5% (152 000 people) from Khatlon region (Statistical Yearbook of Tajikistan, 2011). Commuting has been steadily increasing. About 70-80% of commuters are people who work in urban areas in enterprises and organisations with different forms of ownership and 20-30% are students attending classes in urban areas (Kuddussov, 2012:67). Besides, the difficult and poorly enumerated work available in rural areas doesn't attract rural residents who seek better paid employment with acceptable working conditions in cities. There is already a marked deficit of qualified workers in the cotton production industry in professions that were traditionally considered to be male oriented. Commuting and labour migration contribute to increasing the population's employment rate, decreasing unemployment and improving the living standards of Tajik population. Table-3.1 shows this trend in labour migration.

From 2000-2007, the outflow of rural migration is high. It can be attributed to the fact that during this period Russia experienced the construction boom and they needed a large number of low skilled labours. As a result the people belonging to rural area went for labour migration as we know that in rural areas the poverty rate is high.

Levels of outmigration and the composition of migrant population vary by region with the variations underpinned by factors such as level of poverty, and the demographic context. This is shown below in the table.

Table 3.2

Region	Population density persons per sqkm*	Poverty rate (thousandth of people)*	Emigrated Persons*
GBAO	32	197	2201
Sughd	887	2123	9355
Khatlon	10,85	2169	16356
RRS	-	1553	8338
Dushanbe	57,259	630	4054

Source :*(www.censusinfo.tj,2013);.Accessed on 20/04/2015.

Migration occurs in the region where there is relatively high level of wages which ultimately occurs in those regions where industry and finance is concentrated. These are the reasons why Dushanbe has inflow of migrants instead of outflow. Therefore, it is evident that high salaries are a factor which contributes to migration.

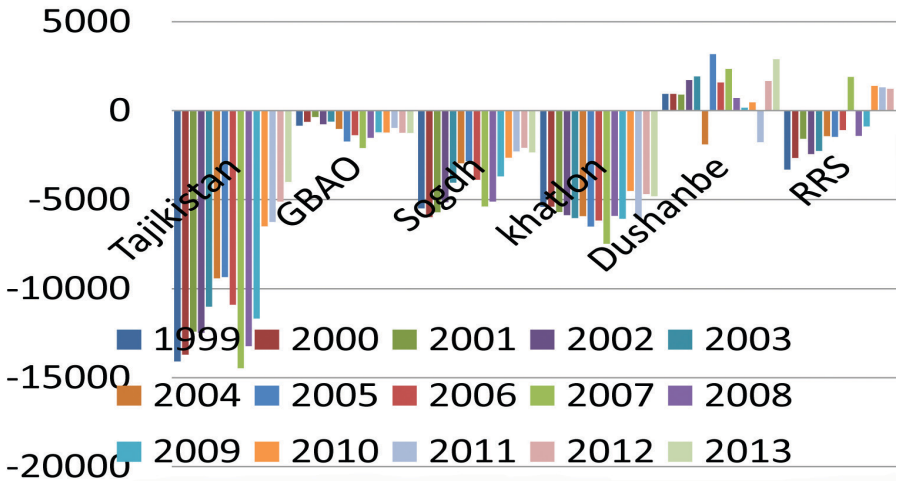
Numerically, from above table the largest number of migrants comes from the regions of Sughd, Khatlon and RRS, although it should be noted that these are also the most populous regions of the country and in these regions poverty rate is high. Khatlon is the poorest region of Tajikistan, so it is expected to produce the largest proportion of migrants as a share of the population e.g., although just 32.5% of the country's population live in Khatlon, the region accounts for 50% of the extremely poor (Bliss, 2010:11). Khatlon is the region most affected by the war and has subsequently been demolished by debt crisis. Migrants from Khatlon are seasonal workers working in Russia on construction sites (Jones et.al, 2007:15). Sughd is the most economically developed and politically influential region. During soviet era industries were concentrated here and level of development of urban infrastructure was high. This created a network of professional and personal connections between enterprises in Sughd and Russia. As a result the migrants from Sughd are shuttle traders or skilled workers. The other significant region of Tajikistan Rayon Republican Subordination RRS- western RRS is an area of non cotton agriculture where structural reforms and privatisation have allowed private farmers to expand and market their crops.

Dynamics reflecting the involvement of the Tajik population in labour migration is reflected in the results of the living standard surveys carried in Tajikistan in different years. Between 1997 and 1999

the number of migrants in household constituted just 1.5 percent. By 1999, according to LFS the number of migrants has increased sharply. According to LFS 2004, at the time of survey (July, when the maximum number of migrants are abroad) a total of 317,900 people or 8.5% of the working age population were working outside the country as labour migrants. Migration of well qualified specialists had indubitably impact on socio economic situation in recent years.

Graph 3.0

Showing Net Migration from Different Regions of Tajikistan



Source: Statistical Agency of Tajikistan (www.stat.tj/english/database.htm). Accessed on:20/01/2015

From Graph 3.0, we can see that Dushanbe is the only urban centre that experiences significant inward migration flows. Due to poor socio economic situation in other regions of Tajikistan and the inability to find work which would ensure normal living standards, most rural migrants move in the city especially to Dushanbe. The capital is changing its face- the once educational and industrial city is being transformed into a rural commercial centre. In Dushanbe life has become more expensive, while the number of people living below poverty line increases (Usmonov, n.d).

From Graph 3.0 we can see that in 2006 and particularly 2007 the number of people wishing to move abroad for permanent residence began to grow again. This can be explained by the fact that the main destination country for Tajik migrants Russia, announced the launch of a public programmes to assist with the voluntary relocation to Russia of Russians living abroad. According to unofficial figures for the period

2006-2007 alone, the number of Tajik families wishing to move to Russia for permanent residence increased several times, constituting several thousands of families. The migrants include doctors, teachers, and qualified blue collar workers. Wages for the existing vacancies, particularly in sectors of health and education, which is mostly female oriented professions don't meet the expectations of the skilled labour force. Due to global economic crisis of 2008 the situation of labour migrants in the Russian federation had worsened, and especially Tajik construction workers were hard hit. Tajik migrants lost their jobs and the employers were not giving them salaries or only part of it (Migration Profile, 2010:49). As a result of recession, Russia reduced their quotas of immigration by half in late 2008. In Moscow, the 2009 quota for foreign labour was initially set at 500,000, later it was halved to 250,000 migrant workers. The situation was same in throughout Russian Federation, even though the quota for 2009 was set at 3,946,747 work permits which was slightly higher than the quota set by the Russians government for 2008 3,384,129 work permits (ACTED, 2009:15).

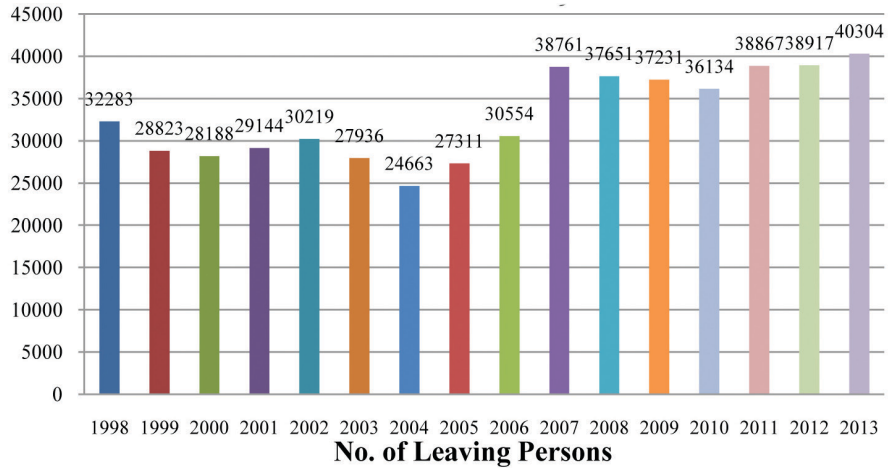
Causes of Emigration

According to the World Development Indicators, the figures of net migration in 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997 are -5749, -21870, -37962, -289263, -324793 respectively. In 1970s and 1980s it was mainly educational migration (Olimova & Bosc, 2003:11) From 1992 to1997, we see a large increase in migration, it can be attributed to the fact that the continuous war threw the population into shock that led to economic recession, hyper inflation, unemployment, steep decline in gross output and collapse of living standards. At this time a large proportion of population almost 83% in Tajikistan lived in poverty and the countries of the region were ranked amongst the poorest in the world (UNDP, 2005:50). As a result, a large proportion of people go for migration as a survival strategy.

Graph 3.1 shows the trends of migration from different regions. From graph 3.1, we can observe that migration from 1998 is decreasing till 2000, then from 2001 to 2002 it is increasing and then from 2003 to 2004 it is declining again and from 2005 to 2007 it is increasing, from 2008 to 2010 it is declining again due to global economic crisis, when the market gets stabilised the migration flows rise again from 2011 to 2013. From 1998 to 2000 we see that there is decrease in number of leaving persons this can be attributed to the fact that Russia's difficult

economic situation and accounts of integration failures weakened the will to return of some Russians still present in Tajikistan who were not sure that they will find better living conditions in Russia.

Graph 3.1
Showing Trends of Migration



Source: Statistical agency of Tajikistan. Retrieved from www.stat.tj. Accessed on : 20/04/2015.

Then from 2001, we see that the number of people who migrate is slightly increasing up to 2002, the reason may be Russians which were still in Tajikistan send their children abroad mainly for schooling because the education system was degraded. Then from 2003 to 2004, it is declining again as we know that most of the Tajik's migrate to Russia because of their similarity in social structure and the familiarity with the Russian language but they were not treated well in Russia and were given low wages and new laws were introduced by the Russian government that complicated the immigration process especially with regard to obtaining citizenship in the Russian federation. Then, from 2005 to 2007 it has increased again, this can be attributed to the fact that the launch of important projects in Russia demanded low skilled labour force of thousands of people. So, the people from neighbouring countries especially Tajikistan move to Russia in order to earn. The repatriation program which was launched by Putin in 2006 was also responsible for the increase in number of migrants. The global financial crisis of 2008-2010 brought on a slump in manufacture, a fall in production, a slowdown in the construction sector, all of which have led to the growth in unemployment (UNIFEM, 2009:15). The consequences of the crisis have had a negative effect on various strata of society including

migrants. The migrants were forced to go back to their native country. As a result we see the migration in declining phase. From 2011 to 2013 it increases again, as we know that the world market got stabilised and the various soviet developmental programs were initiated that summoned young, educated people of the region to occupy positions of political, administrative and economic decision making.

Russian Federal Migration Service had already reported that with the decline of the rubble, the size of the transfer of payments by migrants in Russia to their homelands had sharply fallen that will harm the economies of countries like Tajikistan from which migrants come. The collapse of the rubble and the test of the Russian language would be the reasons for the migrants to leave the nation in large numbers (Goble, 2014). The Tajiks are losing jobs because Russia is facing recession (Parshin, 2015) and as a result in future the migration would be in declining phase. The downturn in Russia has been aggravated by new federal legislation that is making life for migrants harder, too. Some of these regulations target Tajik migrants because Tajikistan has not (yet) joined the Moscow-led Eurasian Economic Union. Russian legislation in 2014 put 270,000 Tajik workers on the re-entry ban list as of November 2014, reducing paid work opportunities. The number of blacklisted migrants reportedly increased in the beginning of 2015. If those labour migrants return home, they are likely to stay home for up to five years. Furthermore, since January 1, 2015, biometric passports are required for all migrants entering Russia. Also, on January 10, 2015, a new law came into force that bans those found to be staying illegally in Russian Federation territory from re-entering for 10 years. These regulations exacerbate the already appalling conditions of labour migrants (Trilling, 2015). From Jan 1, 2015 new Russian legislation bans foreigners from working in trade. Russians cut migrant work permits quota to 1.5 million (Lemon, 2011).

Labour migration in Tajikistan follows certain patterns. The main outflow of labour is towards CIS countries. The immense majority go to Russia, few others go to Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and countries further abroad (Iran, Persian, Gulf States, Mongolia, Canada and U.S.A). It is distinguished by a prevalence of males. According to LFS (2004), of the total number of migrants, men constitute 94.3% and women just 5.7%. Labour migration is seasonal and returning, as family ties are strong back in Tajikistan (Kuddussov, 2009:69). Women migrant workers from Tajikistan total approximately

12 -15 per cent of the overall number of migrants from that country, although expert estimates put the number from 10 to 17 per cent (UNIFEM, 2009:21). Most migrants consider their work abroad as a temporary measure to solve the financial problems of the family to some extent. Due to recently reduced demand in the Russian Federation labour market, as well as the dubious economic recovery of the Russian Federation in the near future, the republic of Tajikistan is more willing to consolidate its cooperation on migration with other regions, including Europe, in order to safeguard working opportunities for the domestic population. Tajikistan had already taken steps to enlarge its markets for its domestic workforce by preparing /signing bilateral agreements on labour migration with several third countries including South Korea and Saudi Arabia (Migration Profile, 2010:60).

Conclusion

As recession is on the peak and several laws are passed by the host countries to curb migration throughout, the migrants would undoubtedly return to their native countries or look for other alternatives like to start a small enterprise in their home countries in order to overcome the economic crisis, this would indirectly result in increase of pressure in the social sphere. The recession and the emanating shrinking labour market in Russia where the majority of Tajik labour migrants go in search of jobs would create new set of challenges for both migrants and locals. There is a possibility of forcible return of substantial proportion of labour migrants to their native countries which would cause larger social, humanitarian and potentially political crisis in the region as the local economies in Tajikistan is not so strong to absorb them. Tajikistan is vulnerable to Russia's economic difficulties which are caused by the pressure of low oil prices, the cost of integrating Crimea and funding the wars in Ukraine and Syria and western sanctions imposed in response to Russia's hostility in Ukraine. Russia's recession resulted in the fall of remittances to Tajikistan as most of the migrants of Tajikistan work in Russia. In the long run ,Central Asian policy makers would need to strengthen social safety nets and should focus on generating employment opportunities at home but for the time being remittances will remain important to their economies. Russian authorities meanwhile should view labour migration as lifeline for their country's labour force and avoid policies forcing migrant workers especially from Tajikistan into shadows.

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Understating the Role of Formal and Informal Institutions in Combating Domestic Violence in Kashmir

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Afnan Tariq

Abstract
Domestic violence is prevalent all across the globe and victims of domestic violence have been using different approaches for seeking help against the same. The purpose of this paper is to explore the different formal and informal support for women who have experienced domestic violence in Kashmir region. Besides the barriers to disclosure and help-seeking has also been studied, considering the socio-cultural aspect of Kashmir. The study revealed that more victims have sought help through informal means rather than formal ones and there are a good proportion of women who haven't sought any help at all. Through this paper, a set of suggestions and recommendations have also been framed for the prevention and control of the domestic violence by ensuring the proper implementation of protective laws, awareness generation, gender sensitization, community involvement and collaboration between different stakeholders, Governmental and Non-governmental.

Keyword
Domestic Violence, Kashmir, Help Seeking, Formal Support, Informal Support, Barriers.

Introduction

Domestic violence is a widespread and distressing phenomenon with millions of women across the world being the victims of this violence. According to the United Nations definition, violence against women includes "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" Domestic violence is defined by the *U.S. Department of Justice* as *a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. It can consist of physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological acts that serve to intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, coerce, threaten, or hurt someone. It has a dramatically disproportionate impact on women*

worldwide, but only recently has it been recognized as a legitimate human rights violation. Any behavior that women themselves identify as abusive by virtue of its intent or effect (this may include such diverse acts as infidelity, verbal aggression or humiliating acts, coerced sex, or refusing to pay for household expenses).

Domestic Violence is a universal phenomenon; it exists across regions and across cultures. According to a World Health Organization report titled 'Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women...' prepared by Claudia-Garcia et. al. (2013) the global prevalence of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence among all ever-partnered women was 30.0% (95% confidence interval CI=27.8%-32.2%). The prevalence was highest in the WHO African, Eastern Mediterranean and South East Asia regions where approximately 37% of ever-partnered women reported having experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point in their lives. Respondents in the regions of Americas reported the next highest prevalence of approximately 30% of women reporting lifetime exposure. Prevalence was lower in the high-income regions 23% and in the European and the Western Pacific Regions, where 25% of ever-partnered women reported lifetime intimate partner violence. Domestic Violence is therefore, a universal reality; the societies which have spearheaded the movements of feminism, human rights and liberty for all, themselves face the challenge of Domestic Violence-indicating that it is not only the third world that faces this challenge.

India is a country with the majority of its citizens living in poor socio-economic conditions. The socio-economic factors along with others contribute to the high figures of Domestic Violence in India. As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS) (2005-2006), an estimated one third of women age 15-49 have experienced physical violence and one in ten has experienced sexual violence owing to 37 percent of women in total having experienced physical or sexual violence; it decreased to 29 percent in 2015-2016. As per the NFHS-3 (2005-2006), the prevalence of physical or sexual violence in Jammu and Kashmir is 13 percent, which is less than the national average of 37 percent; moreover, the recent NFHS-4 (2015-2016) shows that the prevalence of spousal violence has decreased to 9 percent only in 2016.

Abuse recognized or acknowledged by women is considered to be the most crucial stage in her journey away from abuse, because that is the time when she can truly decide what action should be taken.

(Evans & Feder, 2016) The family involvement and society plays an important role in creating and framing coping options for women which may encourage them to seek help for themselves from their family by asking them to advise the best possible way to cope with the situation before taking any decision (Haj-Yahia, 2000). There are so many factors, which may prevent the victim to seek support from the family network, considering the fact that the perpetrator of the abuse in most circumstances is the primary source of support (Hoff, 1990). According to several authors, women develop different coping strategies through an interactive or transactional process with their environment, which is mostly affected by both verbal and non-verbal reactions from others (Lazarus et. al., 2006; Moos and Holahan, 2003). Arias, Lyons, and Street (1997) found that women who attributed the abuse to the partner also felt a lack of spousal support in the marriage. Other family members may refrain from or feel ambivalent about providing support to the woman because of divided loyalties (Rose et. al., 2000).

Researchers have shown that the victim of domestic violence, from a joint family often feels pessimistic in seeking help from both informal and formal agents (Sayem et al, 2013). In the joint family setup, it has been observed that the other family members often witness violence against women due to the regular exposure to the couple; in fact in-laws are the ones who perpetrate violence against women consequently, it may not be necessary to seek support from parents nor are women interested (Farouk, 2005; Naved et. al., 2002). It has also been observed that either the in-law family members may aggravate the situation further or will solve it, by taking possible initiatives. They can even forbid the victim to seek help from others, including her own parents and the community leaders, as it might affect the goodwill of their family (Sayem et. al., 2013).

One of the studies has revealed that generally younger women are less tolerant of domestic violence and are more willing to end the abusive relationship than the women of their mother's or older generations because of the more association and time effect, reflecting that there is a shift in cultural attitudes and resources for abused women (Ellsberg et. al., 2001). A study conducted in Bangladesh by Amir Mohammad Sayem et al, in 2013 revealed an opposite finding, wherein it was found that the older women tend to end the abusive relationship, maybe due to several reasons, women's long exposure to inescapable violence along with their inability, mostly caused by patriarchal social norms, to stop it on their own. In the same study, it was also revealed that women believe

that they are the one who need to change their own behavior in the relationship as opposed to having their husband seek therapy (Sayem et. al., 2013). Domestic violence and abuse requires a multi-agency response which is sensitive to the needs of women at different points in their trajectory, a response that goes beyond sign-posting because many women lack the confidence to act on the information provided. Help may need to be sensitively offered by third parties, be they formal or informal contacts, and not necessarily in response to a direct request from the survivor (Evans & Feder, 2016).

According to the *"world report on violence and health"* by World Health Organization. A huge amount of work carried out on domestic violence has been lead by different women organizations, with occasional support and funding from the government. In countries like Australia, Latin America, North America and parts of Europe, the government has become involved in combating domestic violence, in response to the demands put forth by the civil society for constructive action. In the beginning different activities, which evolved, include elements of legal reform, police training and the establishment of specialized services for victims. With due course of time, a lot of countries have passed laws on domestic violence, but their implementation has not been done in a proper manner, as many officials are either still unaware of the new laws or unwilling to implement them. Experiences have revealed that without the properly sustained efforts to change institutional culture and practice, most legal and policy reforms have little effect. In the developed world, different programs to combat domestic violence came into force, with the establishment of women's crisis centers and battered women's shelters. In 1995, there were approximately 1800 such programs in the United States, 1200 of which provided emergency shelter in addition to emotional, legal and material support to women and their children. In such centers, a lot of provisions were created for the victims like support groups and individual counseling, job training, programs for children, assistance in dealing with social services and with legal matters, and referrals for treatment for drug and alcohol abuse. Similarly, in the early 1980s, the concept of shelter homes and crises centers were seen coming up in many developing countries with few non-governmental organizations offering specialized services to the victims of domestic violence. However, maintaining shelters is expensive, and thus many developing countries instead of opening up shelter homes for the victims have set up telephone hotlines or non-residential crisis centers that provide some of the same services as residential ones.

One of the other approaches is to set up an informal network of ''safe homes'', where the victim can seek shelter for a time being in the homes of neighbors or local place in a community like a temple, mosque or a church. In the year 1980s and 1990s, many legal reforms relating to domestic violence started taking place. The most common reforms involve criminalizing physical, sexual and psychological abuse by intimate partners, either through new laws on domestic violence or by amending existing penal codes. Besides, there have been experiments in some developed countries to back up legislation by introducing special domestic violence courts, training police and court officials and prosecution lawyers, and providing special advisers to help women deal with the criminal justice system. Similar experiments were also seen in developing countries like in India, state governments have established legal aid cells, family courts, lok adalat (people's courts) and mahilla lok adalat (women's courts). In many countries, like the United States, Australia, Canada, Europe and a number of developing countries have started Treatment programs for perpetrators of domestic violence. In such programs, the perpetrators are usually placed in groups where they discuss gender roles and teach skills, including how to cope with stress and anger, take responsibility for one's actions and show feelings for others. Besides in the health sector, a lot of innovative training are being given to stakeholders to prevent domestic violence. In South Africa, the Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training Project and its partner, the Health Systems Development Unit of the University of Witwatersrand, have developed reproductive health and gender course for nurses that have a strong domestic violence component. The community involvement and outreach play an important part in the success of any program. Outreach work has been a major part of the response to domestic violence from nongovernmental organizations. For example in Islington, London, England, "The Domestic Violence Matters project" placed civilian advocates in local police stations, with the task of providing help to all victims of domestic violence within 24 hours of their calling the police. Another initiative by the name "the Domestic Violence Intervention project" in Hammersmith and Fulham (London) combined an education program for violent men with appropriate interventions for their partners. Such programs and campaigns reach a large number of people, in changing attitudes or behavior towards domestic violence (WHO, 2002).

Objectives of the Study

- To study the formal and informal institutions used by the victims of domestic violence for seeking help
- To identify the barriers experienced by the victims of domestic violence

Research Methodology

The study was carried out among 1938 married women in a community-based prevalence study on domestic violence in Kashmir. A population-based survey was conducted in six districts of Kashmir division of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The districts selected were: Srinagar, Budgam, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Bandipora, and Shopian. Multi-stage cluster sampling was used. The cluster structure was: district wards/ villages and households.

Based on the number of households in the selected districts as per J&K Census 2011, the sample size for each district was calculated using the formula $n=z2\times P\ (1-P)/e2$

Using this formula, the overall sample size for the 6 selected districts were 1,938.

Since the number of households in these six districts varies, therefore a proportionate sample size for each district was calculated (J&K Census, 2011)

To achieve these objectives, a 30-item 5-point culturally sensitive scale was developed. For the purposes of scale-development and for setting criteria for what qualifies for domestic violence in this study, domestic violence was operationally defined.

For studying the role of the formal and the informal and to identify the barriers experienced by the victims of domestic violence , in-depth interviews were conducted. An interview schedule was developed to guide act as a guide during the course of the interview.

Interviews were used to explore the victim's pathways for help seeking and support and their experiences of barriers to disclosure. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used to carry out the study. Primary data was also collected through observation by listening to the narratives of domestic violence and also carrying out interviews using a questionnaire schedule. The secondary data was collected from various research papers, articles, reports, and other relevant documents published by different government and non-government organizations.

Motivation for Seeking Help from Different Institutions

After suffering from quite a time, there comes a point where women can't take the suffering any longer and decides to do something against the violence. Most of the time women are motivated to seek help for their children and are able to raise the voice against the abuse if they have the support of their family and friends, to live a life, which is free from abuse. In the study, it was found that even though some of the victims have not sought any formal help against the domestic violence, but by sharing the information which is very sensitive and acknowledging the fact that they are being abused is in itself a big step which can at least make them think that something bad is happening and they need to report the same. It was observed that the victim is motivated to seek help from family, friends, and elders of the family in order to save their marriage. In the context of Kashmir mostly the women seek help from clergy, neighbors, and elders of the family so that religious and moral teachings could be instilled in the spouses wherein the perpetrator is counseled to refrain from the act, which is abusive and unacceptable. Such practices have been already proven fruitful and have helped a lot of families to refrain from domestic violence. If still the violence continues and nothing happens through informal means, the women then switches to the formal means. Victims seek help from women's police stations so that they can talk about the domestic violence to those who are outside their network of family and friends and could seek an advice which is non-judgmental and bias-free, hoping that justice could be done to them.

Seeking Help Through Informal Ways

As the victim accepts that her situation is problematic, the next step is to decide the ways through which it can be solved. In the study, it has been observed the first help that a woman seeks is from the informal agents by getting advice and feedbacks so as to contemplate upon them and take a decision for action, involving staying back to give a chance to the relation, run away to parents place or seeking formal help. 48 % of women have sought help from informal agents. The study revealed that women have sought help from their parents, siblings, clergy (imams), the elders in the family and community. The above agents not only have provided woman with emotional support but also instrumental support, by giving them a place to live and providing them financial help. The informal agents provide the first and basic help to the victim

in the context of Kashmir, as going to the police station which is the only formal way of receiving help in case the of domestic violence has taboo associated with it. So the victim first tries to resolve the matter in the family wherein the family members play an important role in understanding the situation of both the victim and the perpetrator and come to a particular conclusion. If the parties don't reach a particular conclusion, then elders of the community and the clergy (imams) are involved to seek help. The intention is to resolve the problem without breaking the ties between the two. But in certain cases where the severity of abuse is high then the victim seeks formal help.

Seeking Help Through Formal Means

In the Kashmir context, though there is a well-established act for the protection of women against domestic violence, which consists of number of provisions to provide formal support to the victim, but it has not been well implemented in the state yet. The only formal support from where the victim can seek help from is the women's police station. The study revealed that 12% of women have sought formal help. Most of the women when asked about the legal help available in the state responded unsatisfactorily.

Since there is no proper implementation of the act, the victims are devoid of all the necessary provisions otherwise, provided in the act. There is no proper domestic violence agency, which could be immediately contacted following the crisis. The study revealed that no service provider is available for victims of domestic violence which could provide them services like shelter homes, medical facilities, counseling etc. therefore the victim has to directly go to a police station to file a complaint against the perpetrator.

In Kashmir region women visiting a police station in itself creates a lot of taboo, so filing a complaint against her husband is itself a big step to take. The mechanism by which such cases are resolved in the women's police station involves, asking both the parties to present themselves before the station house officer, so that both the parties can put their respective points. In most of the cases, it was seen that negotiations were made to sort out the things between the spouses and very few cases where negotiations couldn't take place find their way to the court of law.

Table Showing the Percentage of Victims who Seek Help from Different Agencies

	Srinagar	Ganderbal	Budgam	Anantnag	Bandipora	Overall
Formal	13%	11%	0%	11%	20%	12%
Informal	43%	78%	65%	72%	23%	48%
No Agency Approached	9%	11%	30%	5%	57%	23%
No Response	35%	-	5%	12%	-	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Formal agencies include court, police, panchayats; informal agencies include elders in family, neighbors (mohalla committees) and clergy. Further no case of domestic violence was found in shopian district during the study.

The above table clearly depicts that 48% of the victims of domestic violence have approached informal agencies for help and only 12% of the women approached formal ones. It, therefore, implies that there is a need to strengthen these informal agencies so that they become competent to deliver help. In addition, there are also a good proportion of victims who do not seek help from any institution, formal or informal (23%).

Barriers for not Seeking Help

Domestic violence is a very sensitive issue, and many of its victims find it really hard to open up about the abuse because of the fear of the repercussions after the disclosure. In the study, it was found that 23% of the women didn't seek any help from any institution, formal or informal, the reasons they give for not seeking help are fear of being looked down upon, consider it inappropriate to disclose family matters, lack of support from family and friends, inconsistency in partner`s behavior. Most of the women thought about their kids and didn't want to lose their custody. Some of the victims didn't want their children to grow without the love of their father. Keeping the culture and societal norms into consideration, many women believed that if they disclose the domestic violence abuse, it will bring shame, embarrassment, and taboo to the family. The most important issue that acted, as a barrier for not seeking help is the economic dependency of the victim on the perpetrator. The women often complained that if they have been

economically empowered to support their family then, they would have ended the abusive relationship. Some women belonging to lower economic strata didn't want to go back to their parents` place, as they believed that this will add to their burden and thus continued to be in an abusive relationship. In some other cases, it was seen that there was an inconsistency in the partners` violent behavior and the victim was in a dilemma whether to seek help or not. It was also observed that the victim blamed themselves and their destiny for the sufferings they are bearing. Their self-perception regarding the whole abusive relationship was in itself a big barrier for them to seek help, as they have become used to face the abuse.

Women's Opinion to Combat Violence

Victim's of domestic violence have their own perspectives vis-a-vis the situation they are facing. The women who were facing domestic violence put forth different opinions and these opinions were clearly framed keeping in view the socio-economic and cultural aspects. Most of the victims believed that women belong to the most vulnerable and weaker section of society and can't do anything regarding this issue. They are of the view that women had to have a lot of patience to deal with issues like these and it is in their destiny to face violence from their husband and they can't change their destiny. Some of the victims had no one to provide support, either their parents were dead or they were economically so weak that they cant afford to help their daughter, since such women were financially dependent on their husband, therefore it was very difficult for them to put an end to the abusive relationship they are in, therefore such women are of the opinion that the women should be financially independent, so that they can take any decision freely, without thinking of the consequences they might be facing if they have no economic support. Some of the women believed that the laws should be stringent and the perpetrators should be given severe punishments, besides victims also demanded maintenance for children from the perpetrator. Also, some believed that in-laws creates a lot of problems for them and had they been lived in a nuclear family, it would have been a better and healthy life for them.

In brief, some of the victims were hopeless and were used to face the abuse from their husbands. They were of the opinion that's it's the part of their life and they can't change it, fearing the consequences it might lead to, while some victims carried strong opinion to stop

violence against women, as they believe that they have the right to live with worth and dignity. In their opinion, women should be financially independent, to raise her own self and her children, according to their views nobody can justify torturing or battering a woman because its inhumane and society should change for the better by giving women their due rights and shun away the taboos, and stereotypes attached to the issues like domestic violence.

Conclusion

The study was carried out to understand the help-seeking ways of the women who are the victim of domestic violence as well as the barriers of disclosure and the reasons for not seeking any help regarding the same. The study revealed that the victims facing domestic violence seek help more through informal agencies than formal ones. It was revealed that the victims of domestic violence seek help from clergy, neighbors, and elders of the family and if nothing happens through informal means only then the women seek help from the formal means so as to combat domestic violence. The victim first tries to resolve the matter in the family rather than directly seeking formal help. The only formal support from where the victim can seek help from is the women's police station. Although the state has a very well established law regarding the prohibition of domestic violence, but it has not been implemented properly in the state. The study also provides a further understanding regarding the barriers of disclosure and the reasons for not seeking help. In the context of Kashmir, if the victim of domestic violence discloses the abuse, there is usually a taboo associated with it. Some of the reasons for not seeking help are: fear of being looked down upon, consider it inappropriate to disclose family matters, lack of support from family and friends, inconsistency in partner`s behavior and most importantly economic dependency. The responses given by the victims of domestic violence have further helped in framing the recommendations and suggestions to combat domestic violence, which need to be heard by different stakeholders to come up with the proper intervention so as to facilitate the victims of domestic violence and decrease its prevalence in the society. Some of the suggestions and recommendations framed for the prevention and control of the domestic violence include proper implementation of protective laws, awareness generation, gender sensitization, community involvement and collaboration between different stakeholders, governmental and non-governmental.

Although *The Jammu and Kashmir Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act*, 2010, has strong provisions to combat the domestic violence but the state should ensure its proper implementation, so that the victims can easily access all the provisions mentioned in the act. There should be enough awareness programs in the state for both men and women, in order to sensitize the whole society about issues like these and how it is leading to other evils, if not taken care of. The society should do away with the taboo associated with the problem of domestic violence and should come up as a whole to remove the barriers of disclosure and reasons for not seeking help. Comprehensive community level programs should be initiated by involving the stakeholders at the grass root level. Mohalla committees, advocacy centers, women forums, support groups should be created which should be easily accessible and should provide the basic help to the victims in and around the community.

Every religion teaches to respect each other and be tolerant towards each other. Since Kashmir is predominantly a Muslim dominant region, therefore the teaching of Islam plays an important role to do away with any form of violence. Besides, there is a need to generate awareness among the masses regarding the rights of women in Islam and how they are to be respected and taken care of.

Care for women experiencing intimate partner violence and sexual assault should, as much as possible, be integrated into existing health services rather than as a stand-alone service. Special medical facilities and crisis intervention should be made easily available for the victims of domestic violence. Women empowerment programs should be initiated. Enough opportunities for employment and participation of women at different levels should be ensured so that the women can enjoy the worth and dignity in society. To optimize the effectiveness of protection laws, programs or other forms of intervention for domestic violence, different stakeholders like the civil society, educational institutions, Mohalla committees, other government and non-governmental a should collaborate and work together to decrease the prevalence of domestic violence and create a society free from all social and moral evils.

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Ladakh at the Cross-road During 19th and 20th Century

Rinchen Dolma

Abstract

In most of the historical records of the Silk Route there is reference to Ladakh, and many viewed it as an extension of it. Ladakh acted as an important gateway in the exchange of men, material and ideas through the ages. Leh the capital of Ladakh was the meeting point for traders from South Asia and from Central Asia. Ladakh as a conduit between India and Central Asia played an important role in the political, commercial and cultural domains both in the ancient and medieval times. Due to its geographical proximity to Central Asia and linkages to old Silk-Route, Ladakh became the transit emporium in the bilateral Indo-Central Asian trade.

The present paper is intended to study the glimpses of historical links of India and Central Asia through Ladakh along with the present geopolitical and geostrategic location of the region. Moreover, the revival of ancient routes of Ladakh and its benefits has also been discussed.

Keywords

Ladakh, Central Asia, Silk-Road, Buddhism, Culture, Trade and Security.

Introduction

Ladakh has always played a fundamental role since early times because of its geographical contiguity with Eastern Turkistan and has provided a space for overland trade routes and also for the existence of socio-cultural links between different regions. The regions of Ladakh and Kashmir Valley had links with the regions of Central Asia stretching back to the nineteenth and the twentith centuries. Today families who had traditional trade links in Leh narrate the trade flows between Leh and Yarkand well into the middle of the last century. The eyes of old bearded men at the historic mosque in downtown Leh twinkle at the mention of the word "Yarkand"; "Reopening the Karakoram Pass", one of them said would be hugely beneficial for Ladakh and will make Leh a major trading centre. These age-old trade relations via Ladakh to Central Asia declined gradually.

Luciano Petech claims that during the second half of the eighth and first half of the ninth century Ladakh must have remained under a loose

suzerainty of Tibet.[1] And being under the suzerainty of Tibet, Ladakh must have been an important trade emporium of the said kingdom. With the fall of Tibetan monarchy, Ladakh and Dardic speaking people continued to have trade relations with Tibet but of a politically independent nature.

Strategically, Ladakh is situated at important trade routes connecting Kashmir with China and Central Asia. As emphasized by Jacqueline Fewkes, the various routes crossing Ladakh provides a spectacle to gaze into the history of the region and its relation with its neighbors.[2] The history of Ladakh can be drawn by going through the roots of various roads to Ladakh and its neighboring countries. It is important to understand Ladakh as a cross-road between British India and Central Asia during the nineteenth and twenty centuries.

Important Routes

Despite its physical remoteness, Ladakh has not been isolated or in any sense cut off from its neighbors. Indeed it was, until 1947, the center of a network of trade routes whose immediate destinations included Skardu, Srinagar, Hoshiarpur, Kulu and through these the wide plains of India, Lhasa, and Yarkand notwithstanding the problems of high altitude and mountainous terrain.[3] There are men still alive in Leh and Kargil who have travelled from Yarkand in Sinkiang across the 5575-metre Karakoram Pass- the trail marked by the bones of men and animals who had died en route, with caravans of horses, mules, and camels laden with Yarkand silk, namdas, and charas; or on the reverse journey with Indian spices and dyestuffs; or who have braved the three-months' trek to Lhasa, its timing in the coldest part of winter dictated by the desire to take in the yearly September market at Gartok in western Tibet carrying coral and gold from Yarkand, and exquisite Yarkandi cups and dishes to grace the tables of the Lhasa nobility. The reminiscences of these men enable us to catch a glimpse of the last traces of an economic system that had lasted for centuries. Even more crucial, more fundamental to Ladakh's economy than this glamorous long-distance trade in luxury goods, was the local inter-regional trade.[4] There are number of routes

1 Petech, Luciano *Kingdom of Ladakh c. 950-1842 A.D.,* Roma: *Istituto Italiano Per ILMedio Ed Estremo Orient,* 1977.

2 Fewkes, Jacquiline H., *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road: An ethno-history of Ladakh.* New York, Routledge. 2009.

3 H.N.Kaul, Shridhar Kaul. *Ladakh Through the Ages: Towards a New Identity.* New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 1992.

4 Fewkes, Jacquiline H., *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road: An*

which connect Ladakh with India on the one hand and China and Central Asia on the other, some of them are given.

The principal links for regions in and beyond India via Ladakh are as follows:[5]

a) Kashmir-Yarkand road: This is the principal high road to Yarkand, via Kargil and Leh.
b) Kullu-Yarkand road: This road enters Ladakh Tehsil from Lahol in the Government territory and is the favorite resort of trader from Hoshiarpur, Amritsar etc. The above two roads form what is called the 'Treaty High Road' and are kept in proper repairs by the British Joint Commissioner.
c) Khalsi-Chorbat road: leaves the Treaty road near Khalsi and joins the Kargil-Skardu road near Kiras. This road remains open only in summer.
d) Tanktse- Lhassa road: reaches Rodak via Man Pangam and Shushal. Is closed for about three months in winter.
e) Giah- Damchok Lhassa road: closed in winter for about two months.

The different roads that lead to Ladakh from all possible directions are as follows:[6]

1. The western road from Kabul and the Punjab, through Kashmir.
2. The south-western road from the central Punjab, through Jammu, Kashtwar and Zanskar to Leh. A branch of this road runs from Zanskar through Rukchu to Leh.
3. The southern road from Lahore and Amritsar, through Kulu, Lahul and Rukchu to Leh. A branch of road from Bisahar, via Spiti, joins this road in Rukchu.
4. The southern-eastern road from Lhasa to Garo and the Indus to Leh. A branch from India, via the Niti Pass, joins this road to Garo.
5. The eastern road from Chinese Tartary, through Rudok and the valleys of Chushal and Sakte to Leh.
6. The northern road from Yarkand and Kotan, over the Karakorum Mountains and down the Shayok and Nubra rivers to Leh. The old route, which is now closed by glaciers that dam the stream, followed the Shayok from its source to Sassar, and hence either

ethno-history of Ladakh. New York: Routledge, 2009

5 *Preliminary Report of Ladakh Settlement*, Leh Archives, Jammu and Kashmir.

6 Cunningham, Alexander., *Ladak- Memorandum detailing the Boundary between the Territories of Maharaja Gulab Singh and British India*. London. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. 1948.

continued down that river, or across the mountains and down the Nubra river to Leh.

7. The north-western road from Balti, via the Shayok and Indus rivers, to Leh.

Ladakh at the Cross-road

In the year 1846, a new princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was created[7] and the region of Ladakh became a part of this princely state. During this period, Ladakh enjoyed a central position in the network of overland caravan routes. Traders of Central Asia, Tibet and India gathered at Leh to exchange their merchandise. This commercial intercourse not only sustained the poor and backward economies of the semi-closed system in these remote and high-altitude areas, but also provided the essential raw materials for the flourishing shawl and carpet industry of Kashmir. It also lent strong support to the local trade passing between Leh and Skardu (Baltistan) which formed a *Tehsil* of the Ladakh Wazarat of the state of Jammu and Kashmir during the Dogra rule. Traders from Russia and Eastern Turkistan met in Leh *Bazaar* with the Indian traders. During the same time many Russian traders visited Kashmir from Ladakh side almost regularly. Russian goods brought from Yarkand were exchanged at the capital of Ladakh, Leh. There was a great demand of the Russian nobility in Moscow and St. Petersburg for large quantities of Kashmiri shawls. Alexander Burnes also wrote about the "great passion for shawls among the Russian nobles", which accounted for their exorbitant prices.[8] However, the Yarkand road for Russians was blocked by the Chinese which prevented their direct access to trade with Kashmir.

As a ruler of the newly created princely state, the maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir acted independently, since he considered this state as his purchased property. In view of the Russian expansion to Central Asian territories, the independence of the Maharaja on frontier became an eye sore to British India; to study the strategic location of the newly created state, missions were deputed. Dr. Cayley was appointed for special duty in Ladakh to watch and ward the frontier situation. Even

7 The Jammu Maharaja associated himself with the British during the Sikh Wars of 1846. The result of which was that a treaty was imposed on the Lahore Darbar by British and Kashmir and the hilly regions of Ladakh, Baltistan, Astor, Hunza and Gilgit district were sold to Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu for a sum of seventy-five lakh Nanakshahi.

8 Burnes , A. *Trav*els *into Bokhara, a Journey from India to Cabool, Tartary, and Persia in 1831-3.* vols. 2nd ed. London. 1835.

then, the control of the British in Ladakh was very limited.[9] Due to the strategic importance of routes that connected the British Indian territory of Punjab to Central Asia, the control of Delhi Darbar was increased over the maharaja.

The role of British India in Ladakh began with the 'Great Game', which was the product of an intense Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia during the nineteenth century. The mounting Anglo-Russian rivalry led the British to draw on Ladakh as a 'buffer zone' to keep an eye on expansionist Russia. It is interesting to acknowledge that the interests and constant involvement of the British, Russian as well as Chinese in the region of Eastern Turkistan.[10] British from the late 1860's extended their influence in Ladakh with the appointment of a Trade Agent at Leh. According to G.L Alder,[11] the duty of the first British Trade Agent Dr. Henry Cayley, was to make certain improvements in the trade. According to British sources, Dr. Cayley was posted at Leh with the task to "maintain the tariff fixed by the Maharaja of Kashmir" but actually had to "enquire into the state to trade between India and Central Asia and to collect and sift political information regarding the progress of events in Chinese Turkistan". In the beginning, Cayley's presence at Leh was seasonal and temporary, but later on he was appointed as a permanent Leh agent designated as British Joint Commissioner, following the treaty between Government of India and Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in 1870.[12] Along with the Jammu and Kashmir Wazir, he had the responsibility of supervising the Treaty Road to Central Asia and at the same time maintaining political developments too.

Resultantly, the British interest in Ladakh and its frontier territories declined the control of the Maharaja in Eastern Turkistan and further down-graded the relations between Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir and Yakub Beg, the ruler of Eastern Turkistan (1865-1877). Controlling of the route in the peripheries and the frontiers allowed the British state

9 Alexander Cunningham focuses on the major valleys and rivers to describe the outlying of routes; other sources emphasize the major centers of halts or the major regions of departures and destinations.Cunningham, Alexander., *Ladak, Physical, Statistical and Historical: with notices of the surrounding countries*. London. W.H. Allen & co. 1854.

10 Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Gme: On secret service in high Asia* . John Murray Publishers. 2006.

11 G.Alder. *British India's Northern Frointier.* London: The Royal Commonwealth Society and Longmans. 1963.

12 Cayley, *Dr. Copy of Dr. Cayley's report : From T.H. Thornton, Esq., Secy. to Govt., Punjab to W.S. Seton-Karr, Esq., Secy. to Govt. of India*. Foreign Political A, National Archeive of India. 1868.

to strengthen its inner control on the princely State and at the same time enhance security on the borders.[13]

Present Geopolitical Concern

Since then there were no active involvements in the area. Ladakh's strategic importance post-independence was neglected and the northeastern part of Ladakh was considered as the world's bleakest stretches, where Nehru describes, "no people live and no blade of grass grows."[14] Nevertheless the area involves the question of national security for both China and India. The strategic location of Ladakh, as the part of trans-Himalayan trade route is ignored, and no serious attempt to explore this significant geopolitical location has been done. However, from 1990's onwards, India considered Central Asia as "our near abroad".

In 2012, New Delhi launched a new "Connect Central Asia" policy to develop India's engagement in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). SCO as a multilateral organization involves Central Asia and deals with issues like trade and terrorism. India since 2005 joined SCO as an observer, and actively sought to become a full member which fructified with India being accepted as a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2016. This event raised India's stakes in the Central Asian region. While interacting with the foreign policy expert, P Stobdan, a senior fellow at the New Delhi-based Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), mentioned that, "India is working to set up other international transport corridors, thereby facilitating trade and commercial interaction with the Eurasian region". He emphasizes India's lack of a defense strategy in the Central Asian region. There is a possibility that India can achieve its access to Central Asia via Ladakh by developing good connectivity to Leh and further reopening the long historical trade relation with Central Asia. Given its strategic importance with regard to Central Asia, India must recast its sense of Himalayan geopolitics and frontier policy.

Revival of Traditional Trade Routes

The land geography is less prone to drastic changes than human

13 Canning, Edward. *Roads from India to Central Asia.* American Association for the Advancement of Science 5 (May 1885).

14 Fisher M.W. and L.E. Rose. *Ladakh and the Sino-Indian Border Crisis*. Asian Survey.1962.

geography,[15]which means that there can be frequent alteration to the political frontiers, but still the geographical boundaries remains same. One of the best examples of such boundaries is the Karakoram Pass, which was used by the Leh-Yarkand trade caravan. This ancient Karakoram trade route can serve as India's grand gateway for trade and commerce to Central Asia. Central Asia can be reached from India crossing this route via Xinjiang, an autonomous province of China. Moreover, China has confirmed that Kashgar in Xinjiang would be made a free trade zone in recent years.[16] From China's side, freight roads are already connected to Central Asia. On the Indian side, on-going construction for the Rohtang pass tunnel in Himachal Pradesh, is expecting completion in the near future. This road connecting Delhi to Leh would be an all-weather road. A perennial motorable road already exists between Leh and up to the base of the Saser La Mountain. The Karakoram Pass is not very far from here. Therefore, traditional trade links can revive and be made commercially viable again. For India, Karakoram trade route is significant in many ways. There were hesitations of the Karakoram and Saser passes as routes that could allow Chinese invaders into Indian subcontinent. This was true to a certain extent up to 1984, when the mountain ranges west of Karakoram were not controlled by India. Now with *Saltoro ridge* firmly controlled by Indians, Karakoram and Saser passes can be considered as gateways that serve as rigid boundaries between India and Central Asia.

The growth of Asian integration and emerging economic opportunities for interregional trade are generating demand for viable transport connectivity and land-linking services. Nevertheless, India and Central Asian countries have been tackling with the problem of distance and geopolitical confrontation. The more important question is, how to restore the ancient Silk Route via Ladakh that provided a space to connect India with Central Asia, through China's Xinjiang province? It is clear that Xinjiang was the hub for all sorts of transportation in ancient times and remains so at present. One of the ways that India can link itself with Central Asia is through Xinjiang and Ladakh remains

15 Mackinder, Halford J. *The Geographical Pivot of History.* The Geographical Journal 23, 1904.

16 Liu, Xia., Xinjiang Kashi zonghebaoshuiqutongguoguojiazhengshiyanshou: weinanjiangshougezongbaoqu (The Xinjiang Kashgar Free Trade Zone Pass the State's Accreditation. This Is the First Free Trade Zone in Southern Xinjiang). *Zhongguo Kashi tequ wang*, (*The Net of Kasghar Special Economic Zone, China*), 9 January,*http://www.kstq.gov.cn/xwpd/GZTQ/201501/00002648.html*. 2015.

one of the most viable routes to Xinjiang. However, the geo-strategic importance of Ladakh with respect to Central Asia is not yet fully realized in India and China's sensitivity to any engagement in Jammu & Kashmir may rule out this option. The reactivation of route via Ladakh would have a symbolic implication, essentially for revival of the traditional Silk Route which was vibrant until 1947. As compared to the relatively unstable areas of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, the route passing through Xinjiang would be more feasible.

Today China directly connects itself under the guiding principle of "Silk Route Strategy" via its province Xinjiang with the Eurasian countries. Beijing has constructed railways, highways, pipelines to reach out different trade centers. One of the major achievements of China was to accomplish Pakistan-bound Karakoram highway across Gilgit-Hunza-Chitral-Dir and Islamabad to Arabian Sea. China is now planning to improve routes, connecting Yarkand and Khotan with Rudok, Gartok, and lastly Taklakot, so as to boost trade. India on the North West frontier has three options in terms of opening up of roads and railways. These were the ancient trade routes connecting India with China and Central Asia via Ladakh or Gilgit and Wakhan Corridor or Kabul to Central Asia. The restoration of Ladakh route would facilitate India's trade with China as well as Central Asia.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is in the interests of both India and China to realize the strategic importance of the border area of Ladakh and work for the restoration of the traditional Ladakh Route. One must remember that Karakoram Pass is a natural geographical gateway and is going to remain so for ever. Ladakh was historically linked with its neighboring states through diverse sub-corridors. The connection was symbolic of peace, prosperity, cross-cultural and human security until late 1940s. Unfortunately, the interconnection that ripped apart in 1947 eventually hindered the whole process of free trade, human passage and religio-cultural movements across the otherwise porous borders. Even formal trade declined, however people of Anlay, Hemya, Kuyul, Demjok Nyoma, Mud and other border regions continue to indulge in informal trade. There exists informal trade in cloths, dress materials, electronic goods, medicines, crockery, porcelain, footwear, craft products, tea, saffron, jewellery etc. on the Indo-Chinese cross-border points in Ladakh. Apart from this, both have volatile zones in Jammu and Kashmir and

Xinjiang, where the Kashmiris and Uighurs, the two Muslim identities, ethnically divergent though, make a common case of "secessionism" from New Delhi and Beijing. The stability depends on China, India, and Pakistan remaining cordial and demonstrating willingness for peace, composite dialogue, and conflict resolution within the "humanitarian universals".

In the light of the significance of Ladakh region as stated above, there is a need to undertake comprehensive study on cross-border development to assess feasibility for developing International linkages via traditional routes to foster stability, connectivity and growth.

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The Journal of Central Asian Studies
A Bibliometric Study

Fayaz Ahmad Loan

Abstract

The study is the first bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies". This journal started its publication from 1990 (a year before the disintegration of the former USSR) and 23 volumes had been published till 2016.

Objectives of the study - The study aims to conduct the bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies" from 1990 to 2016 in order to identify editorial assignments, authorship patterns, and institutional productivity, geographical contribution in the journal.

Methodology - The bibliometric data of the papers were manually collected from the hard copies of the journal in the excel file. Later, the data were tabulated and analysed using the simple mathematical and statistical quantitative techniques to reveal the findings.

Findings - The journal published 266 papers in 23 volumes contributed by 202 authors from 55 institutions and 23 countries of the world. Prof. Abdul Majeed Matoo performed the duties of the "Chief Editor" of the maximum volumes (12) of the journal followed by Prof. G N Khaki for (3). The content analysis of the journal depicted that the research papers constitute the maximum contents (252, 94.74%) whereas book reviews (9, 3.38%), abstracts (1.13%) and reprints (2, 0.75%) are also available in little number. The authorship trends of the journal revealed that the maximum number of research papers are contributed by the single author (232, 87.22%) followed by double authors (27, 10.15%) and Triple authors (07, 2.63%) respectively. The maximum number of papers are contributed by Ajiaz A. Bandey (10) followed by M. A. Kaw (9) and G. M. Mir (8) respectively. Among the fifty five (55) academic and research institutions, the top contributing institutions are the University of Kashmir (139), Jawaharlal Nehru University (18), University of Mumbai (11), Aligarh Muslim University (9), University of Jammu (7), and Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan (7) respectively. The regional analysis shows that twenty-three (23) countries of the world have contributed to the journal and the maximum number of papers are contributed by India (208, 78.20%) followed by Uzbekistan (8, 3.01%), Kazakhstan (7, 2.63%), USA (6, 2.26%) and Pakistan (4, 1.50%) respectively.

Keywords

Central Asia, Bibliometrics, Authorship Patterns, Authorship Collaboration.

1. Introduction

1.1 Central Asia

Central Asia is important in its own right as it is the vital fulcrum between the dynamism of East Asia and the wealth and technology in Western Europe (David Denoon, 2016). Central Asian region mainly extends from the Caspian Sea in the west to the border of western China to the east. According to Kidd (2007), "It is hard to define the area covered by Central Asia due to physical and political factors and the decision making of the last 200 years have defined and re-defined borders, however, the Central Asian region stretches from the eastern edges of Mongolia, including the western Chinese province of Xinjiang, to the Black Sea and modern Turkey; and south to include a little of Northern Iran and Northern Afghanistan". Strategically, it is placed between Russia, China, Iran, and Afghanistan. Central Asia comprises of the five states of the former USSR including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Other areas are often included such as Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Kashmir and Ladakh – and Western parts of the People's Republic of China such as Xinjiang, Southwestern and Middle China such as Tibet and Inner Mongolia (Mir, 1993). The region of Central Asia is mostly viewed as the major bastion of the human civilizations. However, this region gained prime importance in research since the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 as many research centres were established worldwide to conduct research on the region. The research establishments focus on various regional issues and problems. As a result, a large corpus of research information has been produced and published worldwide on Central Asia. However, the present study will conduct a bibliometric study of the "The Journal of Central Asian Studies".

1.2 Bibliometrics

Bibliometrics is a promising area of research in the field of library and information science (LIS) and has realistic applications in measuring the coverage and quality of books, journals, and articles. Bibliometrics implies the use of standard statistical and mathematical analysis on bibliographic data (Jena, Swain and Sahu, 2010). The term Bibliometrics was coined in 1969 by Alan Pritchard who defined it as, "the application of mathematics and statistical methods to books and other media of communication" (Pritchard, 1969). Hood and Wilson (2001) analyzed the three matrices - Bibliometrics, Informetrics, and Scientometrics and

opined that bibliometrics finds its roots in bibliography and statistics which can be administered on bibliographic data to achieve results. It acts as an instrument of documenting the publication performance of authors and institutions as well as the reception of their work measured by a number of citations. Bibliometrics as a technique has extensive applications in identifying and studying the research trends in a subject, author productivity, research collaboration, literature growth, core periodicals, institutional performance, regional contribution, citation patterns, and other dimensions.

1.3 Journal of Central Asian Studies

The Journal of Central Asian Studies (ISSN 0975086X)" started its publication in 1990 (a year before the disintegration of the former USSR) and 23 volumes of the journal had been published till 2016. Besides, printing its high-quality hard copies, the journal is published in electronic form as well. It is considered as one of the prominent journals on Central Asia and has a gained great reputation among the Central Asian experts. The Journal has an international recognized Editorial Board and is acclaimed across the world for its quality, style and content. This refereed journal receives research papers from across the world. Later, these papers are reviewed by the area study experts from India and abroad. The journal is indexed in the world's two leading databases-EBSCO and ProQuest.

2. Research Design

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to conduct the bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies" from 1990 to 2016 on various parameters, viz:

a) To study the editorial assignments, their duties and responsibilities;
b) To study the authorship patterns, collaboration, affiliation, ranking, and credibility; and
c) To study the institutional and geographical contribution to the journal.

2.2 Methodology

The study is the first bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies". The Journal started its publication in 1990 and 23 volumes were published till 2016 containing 266 papers. The bibliometric data of the papers were manually collected from the hard copies of the

Journal in the excel file. Later, the data were tabulated and analysed using simple mathematical and statistical quantitative techniques.

2.3 Limitations

The study is the bibliometric analysis of a single journal and its findings can't be generalized.

3. Data Analysis

3.1 General Analysis

The present study is the first bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies" published since 1990 and till 2016. The journal published 266 papers in 23 volumes contributed by 202 authors from 55 institutions and 23 countries of the world (Table 1).

Table 1
General Information

Number of Years	Number of Volumes	Number of Papers	Number of Authors	Number of Institutions	Number of Countries
27	23	266	202	55	23

3.2 Editorial Assignments

The Centre of Asian Studies has published 23 volumes of the journal till 2016. Prof. Abdul Majeed Matoo is the "Chief Editor" of the maximum (12) volumes of the Journal followed by Prof. G N Khaki for (3). All other "Directors" of the Centre also performed the duties of "Chief Editors". However, the "Director" of the Centre of the Central Asian Studies always remains the "Chief Editor" of the journal officially. Prof. Gulshan Majeed has performed the duties of "Editor" for 15 volumes followed by Prof. M A Kaw and Prof. G M Mir for 3 volumes each (Table 2).

Table 2
Editorial Assignments

S. No.	Chief Editor	Number of Volumes	Percentage
1.	Prof. Abdul Majeed Matoo	12	52.17
2.	Prof. Gulshan Majeed	02	8.70
3.	Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw	02	8.70
4.	Prof. Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Mir	02	8.70
5.	Prof. Ghulam Rasool Jan	02	8.70
6.	Prof Ghulam Nabi Khaki	03	13.04

S. No.	Editor/s	Number of Volumes	Percentage
1.	B K Deambi	01	4.35
2.	Prof. Gulshan Majeed	15	65.22
3.	Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw	03	13.04
4.	Prof. Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Mir	03	13.04
5.	Prof. Ghulam Rasool Jan	00	0.00
6.	Prof. Aijaz A Bandey	01	4.35

3.3 Content Analysis

The content analysis of the journal depicted that the research papers constitute the maximum contents (252, 94.74%) whereas book reviews (9, 3.38%), abstracts (1.13%) and reprints (2, 0.75%) are also available in little number (Table 3).

Table 3
Content Analysis

S. No.	Category	Number	Percentage
1.	Research Paper	252	94.74
2.	Book Review	09	3.38
3.	Abstract	03	1.13
4.	Reprints	02	0.75
	Total	**266**	**100**

3.4 Authorship Collaboration

The authorship trends of the journal revealed that the maximum number of research papers are contributed by the single author (232, 87.22%) followed by double authors (27, 10.15%) and Triple authors (07, 2.63%) respectively. It shows that the collaboration among the authors isn't so healthy in the journal (Table 4).

Table 4
Authorship Collaboration

S. No.	Authorship Pattern	Number of Papers	Percentage
1.	Single	232	87.22
2.	Double	27	10.15
3.	Triple	07	2.63
	Total	**266**	**100**

3.5 Prominent Authors

In all 202 authors have contributed to the journal in which the prominent authors of the journal are mostly local followed by national and international respectfully. The maximum number of papers are contributed by Ajiaz A. Bandey (10) followed by M. A. Kaw (9), G. M. Mir (8), Gulshan Majeed (7), P. L. Dash (7), and R. G. Gidadhubli (6) respectively (Table 5).

Table 5
Prominent Authors

S. No.	Name of Authors	Number of Papers	Rank
1.	Ajiaz A. Bandey	10	1
2.	M. A. Kaw	09	2
3.	G. M. Mir	08	3
4.	Gulshan Majeed	07	4
5.	P. L. Dash	07	4
6.	R. G. Gidadhubli	06	5
7.	Darakhshan Abdullah	05	6
8.	G. M. Shah	05	6
9.	M. Afzal Mir	05	6
10.	Tabasum Firdous	05	6
11.	A. M. Matoo	04	7
12.	A. R. Shah	04	7
13.	G. N. Khaki	04	7
14.	M. Monir Alam	04	7
15.	G. R. Jan	03	8
16.	Mohammad Ashraf Wani	03	8
17.	M. Ibrahim Wani	03	8
18.	Shamus-Ud-Din	03	8

3.6 Authors' Credibility

The designation of authors is a quality metric index of the papers. The papers of the journal are contributed by a wide range of authors from academicians to defense experts like Professors, Associate Professors, Readers, Assistant Professors, Lecturers, Researchers, Defence Experts, Research Associates, and Research Fellows belonging to the various fields of knowledge. It is a good sign that most of the papers are contributed by Professors (65, 21.17%), Lecturers (57, 18.57%),

Assistant Professors (33, 10.75%), and Research Scholars (28, 9.12%) respectively (Table 6).

Table 6
Designation of Authors

S. No.	Designation	Number of Papers	Percentage
1.	Professor	65	21.17
2.	Director	20	6.51
3.	Associate Professor	15	4.89
4.	Reader	16	5.21
5.	Assistant Professor	33	10.75
6.	Lecturer	57	18.57
7.	Researcher	9	2.93
8.	Research Associate	8	2.61
9.	Research Scholar	28	9.12
10.	Research Fellows	17	5.54
11.	Others	24	7.82
12.	Anonymous	15	4.89
	Total	**307**	**100**

3.7 Institutional Contribution

A good number of academic and research institutions (55) of the world have contributed to the journal. The top five institutions in terms of their contribution are the University of Kashmir (139), Jawaharlal Nehru University (18), University of Mumbai (11), Aligarh Muslim University (9), University of Jammu (7), and Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan (7) respectively. It is noteworthy to mention that the Centre of Central Asian Studies (publishing body of the journal) has contributed (95) papers alone (Table 7).

Table 7
Institutional Contribution

Rank	Institutional Affiliation	Number	Percentage
1.	University of Kashmir, J&K, India	139	52.26
2.	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India	18	6.77
3.	University of Mumbai, Mumbai, India	11	4.13
4.	Aligarh Muslim University, Up, India	9	3.38
5.	University of Jammu, J&K, India	7	2.63

6.	Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan	7	2.63
7.	Department of Higher Education, J&K, India	6	2.26
8.	Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India	5	1.88
9.	Guru Nanak Dev University, Punjab, India	3	1.13
10.	J&K Cultural Academy, J&K, India	2	0.75
11.	Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, India	2	0.75
12.	Archaeological Survey of India, India	2	0.75
13.	Panjab University, Chandigarh, India	2	0.75
14.	University of Leicester, United Kingdom	2	0.75
15.	Department of Education, J&K, India	2	0.75
16.	Others (One Each)	40	15.04
17.	Anonymous	9	3.38
	Total Institutions (55)	**266**	100

3.8 Geographic Distribution

Twenty three (23) counties of the world have contributed in the journal including India. The maximum number of papers are contributed by India (208, 78.20%) followed by Uzbekistan (8, 3.01%), Kazakhstan (7, 2.63%), USA (6, 2.26%) and Pakistan (4, 1.50%) respectively (Table 8).

Table 8
Geographic (Countries) Distribution

S. No.	Country	Noumber of Papers	Percentage
1.	India	208	78.20
2.	Uzbekistan	8	3.01
3.	Kazakhstan	7	2.63
4.	USA	6	2.26
5.	Pakistan	4	1.50
6.	Kyrgyzstan	3	1.13
7.	Turkey	3	1.13
8.	Russia	2	0.75
9.	United Kingdom	2	0.75
10.	Iran	2	0.75
11.	Tajikistan	2	0.75
12.	Berlin	1	0.38
13.	China	1	0.38

14.	Oman	1	0.38
15.	Mongolia	1	0.38
16.	Mexico	1	0.38
17.	Hungary	1	0.38
18.	Bangladesh	1	0.38
19.	Italy	1	0.38
20.	Libya	1	0.38
21.	Sweden	1	0.38
22.	Georgia	1	0.38
23.	Israel	1	0.38
24.	Anonymous	7	2.63
	Total	**266**	**100**

3.9 Analysis of References

The references to the paper are a valuable tool to depict the quality of the paper. The range of references varies from 0-180. However, the almost 52% of the papers have up to 20 references and 48% have more than 20 references (Table 9). The average number of citations per article is 29.

Table 9

Analysis of References

S. No.	**Number - Series**	**Citations per Article**	**Percentage**	**Mid Value**	***fx***
1.	0-20	139	52.26	10	1390
2.	21-40	61	22.93	30	1830
3.	41-60	34	12.78	50	1700
4.	61-80	18	6.77	70	1260
5.	81-100	6	2.26	90	540
6.	101-120	5	1.88	110	550
7.	121-140	2	0.75	130	260
8.	141-160	0	0.00	150	000
9.	161-180	1	0.38	170	170
		Σf=266	**100%**		**Σfx=7700**
Arithmetic Mean		**Σfx/ Σf**	**7700/266**	**28.947**	**29**

4. Discussion

The present study is the first bibliometric analysis of the "Journal of Central Asian Studies" from 1990 - 2016. The journal published 266 papers in 23 volumes contributed by 202 authors from 55 institutions

and 23 countries of the world. The frequency of the journal is annual but the Centre has published only 23 volumes in 27 years. The possible reason may be the armed conflict in the J&K, which also started in 1989 a year before the commencement of the journal. It has badly affected the academic pursuits and educational system of the J&K state. In this age of trauma, the Centre has succeeded to publish the 23 volumes of the journal so far in the directorship of Prof. Abdul Majeed Matoo, Prof. Gulshan Majeed, Prof. M A Kaw, Prof. G M Mir, Prof G R Jan, Prof. Aijaz A Bandey and Prof. G N Khaki. It is pertinent to mention that the "Director" of the Centre acts as the "Chief Editor" of the journal officially. Actually, it is the editorial team consisting of the Journal Advisory Board, Editor, Associate editors, Reviewers and other editorial assistants who perform various activities under the leadership of the "Chief Editor" to publish "The Journal of Central Asian Studies". The authorship trends of the Journal revealed that almost 87% of research papers are contributed by the single author. It shows that the collaboration among the authors isn't so healthy in the journal. Moreover, the prominent authors of the journal are mostly local followed by national. The participation of the foreign authors is very less. Besides, the journal has published papers received from 55 academic and research institutions of the world. The top institutions in terms of their contribution are the University of Kashmir (India), Jawaharlal Nehru University (India), University of Mumbai (India), Aligarh Muslim University (India), University of Jammu (India), and Academy of Sciences, (Uzbekistan) respectively. Further, the journal has published papers received from 23 counties of the world. The maximum number of papers is contributed by India followed by Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, USA and Pakistan respectively. All the above facts show that the participation of the foreign authors, institutions and countries is not so healthy, that is a sign of concern. The editorial board must adopt strategies to attract authors' of internationally reputed institutions from various countries to contribute in the journal. The call for papers should be published on various international platforms and Central Asian forums to receive the attention of foreign authors of international repute. Moreover, the journal authorities must send an invitation to foreign Central Asian experts for publication in the journal. It will highly increase the publication share of international authors and institutions respectively. The papers of the journal are contributed by a wide range of authors from academicians to defense experts

like Professors, Associate Professors, Readers, Assistant Professors, Lecturers, Researchers, Defence Experts, Research Associates, and Research Fellows belonging to the various reputed institutions imparting knowledge in an array of fields of knowledge. It is a positive sign that the papers of the journal are qualitative in nature.

The journal has published 266 papers till 2016 and the almost 95% of the contents constitute research papers. The journal publishes 11 articles as an average in one volume that needs to be increased. Further, the journal is published annually and its periodicity can be changed from annually to half-yearly or quarterly to accommodate more papers. However, it needs more involvement and academic labour of the journal staff.

Conclusion

The Journal of Central Asian Studies is one of the reputed journals on Central Asia, focusing on economic, political, sociological, geographical, historical, religious, cultural, linguistic and other aspects of the greater Central Asian region including the five former republics of USSR. However, the journal has to adopt new publication technologies and trends to stay relevant in the present information society. Further, the journal is required to be indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases to gain impact factor which is a yardstick to measure the quality of journals along with other parameters.

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Vedantism and Sufism
A Comparative Study

Wahid Nasaru

Abstract

The tradition of Vedant and Sufism both as doctrines and practices are firmly founded on the priori that there is a dimension of existence which is beyond conceptual comprehensions. A mystic and spiritual dimension that is more experienced than explained. Mystical traditions of Vedant and Sufism although sprouting from two distinct belief systems address the same universal human problem of being, truth and absolute reality. Both aspire and expect from its adherents to search for truth through intuition and personal experience while rejecting sources of knowledge other than divine to be authentic . Present paper is an attempt to deconstruct the phenomena of mystical practices of Vedant and Sufism which defy to be subjected to explanation and empirical applications, thus are resilient to be reduced to be confined to time and space; as an absolute is by its nature eternal and infinite beyond the realm of time and space. Although not claiming to be strictly a comparative study, the paper takes these mystical traditions as a general human phenomenon with a few commonalities , in cosmogony, ritual practices structural organization despite a marked difference between the universalizing Islam and ethnic religion Hinduism. However in a crude sense both are cults and fringe religions in a sense that the cults arise to meet demands not being satiated by the existing exoteric forms held by the majority.

Keywords

Vedant, Sufism, Exoteric, Esoteric, Aphoristic, Metaphorical, Brahmaan, Sukta, Aayat, Atman, Unity of God, Mukti, Baqa.

Introduction

Mystical traditions of Vedant and Sufism, although sprouting from two distinct belief systems of Hinduism and Islam, address the problems of being, truth and absolute reality. Despite developing in entirely two different socio-cultural and geographical settings at two different time frame works, vow for the search of truth through intuition: rejecting sources of knowledge other than divine to be authentic.

The traditions of Vedant and Sufism: - both as doctrine and practice are firmly founded on the priori that there is a dimension of existence which is beyond conceptual comprehensions. The mystic or spiritual

dimension that is more experienced than explained. Explanations and emperical applications reduce an object to a thing in space and time. It will be absurd to reduce absolute reality to a thing which by its very nature is eternal and infinite, beyond the realms of time and space. It defies conceptualization and even imagination. One can only be bewildered (Ibn Arabi) creation, creator, God, Brahman are veiled in mysteries and all scientific (empirical) approach proves a failure to demystify these realities. Transcendence or the concept of beyond are beyond appropriation in absolute terms. While deliberating upon the concepts with regard to religion, some methodological problems are bound to arise, which need to be explained if not solved entirely.

Western social thought is oblivious to the sacred mystery of being and does not acknowledge intuition or mystical experiences as valid sources of knowledge and that these don't have knowable structure which defies analysis. On the contrary Advaitini and sufis reject logic and reasoning and consider intuition and knowledge as the sole source to see the reality. It is the domain of the knowledge where the actions and consequences are assumed to b true if they are universely believed to be true. As John Dewy states that religious beliefs are not statements of the fact but are aspirations and are far from illusiory. They exist and in their interaction with actual conditions of life have consequences-they are real that way.[1] With this argument a functional theory of religion can be formulated. The approach therefore, should be to investigate not what religion or religious belief or a practice is, but what it does to its practitioner and the collectivity, where it is practiced. These consequences can be operationalised during investigation.

The Vedanta and Sufism as a focus of enquiry has been immensely deliberated and the share bulk of the literature is intriguing as well as frustrating. The original sources of Vedant doctrine are Vedas, Upanishads and a treasure of commentaries written in archaic Sanskrit. Carried first through oral tradition (Surthiparampara) and then put in writing over a long period of time. The sacred language has turned into an archaic relic as far as its spoken dimension is concerned. That a very large volume perhaps even the greater volume of the primary and secondary material, indispensable to social science research, is still unpublished. The major portion of commentaries and critique is yet to be translated so as to be available to researchers not knowing Sanskrit. On the other hand Sufi literature and its critique is besieged with the

1 John Dewy, A common Faith, New Heaven, Yale University press,1934.

problem of being multi lingual and spanned across the personal and public library of sub continent, Asia, Africa and Europe. The primary documents are in Arabic and Persian languages and mostly in manuscript form and yet to be explored. Absence of such material hampers to trace the origin and development of tradition in a scientific way.

Same applies to the aspects of philosophy, metaphysics, art, poetry, ritual practices, which in Vedant case spread over thousands of years and for Sufism it is transcontinental. Both need volume of expertise and knowledge of languages. We owe much to the orientalists who painstakingly brought these masterpieces of literature to the fore for contemporary readers and researchers. For the present paper entitled "Vedant and Sufism: A Comparative Study", the literature reviewed although but a drop in the ocean, facilitated the construction of a conceptual framework and a theoretical background. Besides holy texts of Vedas, Quran and their Exagetical commentaries the review includes Das Gupta, Surendra Nath (1922,1924), Arthur Llewllyn Basham (1954). Dawson Paul, Geden (1972), Roy Parret (2000), Ganga ja Nath (1903-1936), Ghate V. S (1926), Cough (1923), Griffith R.T (1920), Hirayana M. (1960), Keith Arthur Baredale (1925), Mahadevan (1938,1975), Max Muller (1887.1956), Andrew Fort and Patricia Mumme(1966), Radha Krishnan S.(1951), Roy Parett (2000), William Indrich (1980), Aditya K. Gupta (2013), Micheal Comans (2000).

For sufi philosophical dimensions the works reviewed are Nasr Syed Husain (1991), Shimmel Annemarie (1975,1985), Sells Micheal (1996), Arberry (1948, 1952, 1990), Birchardt Titus (1983), Smith, Grace Martin, Earnest (1994), von Schlligal (1990), Oral Nicholson (2009), Martin Lings (1956), Afifi Abul Ala (1939), Gibb (1945) and Hourani Albert (2009). In addition the reputed English translations of the master pieces such as Kashf Al-Mahjub of Hujwiri, Mantakotayir of Fareed-ud-din Attar, Fasusul-Hikam of Ibn Arabi, Insaan-i-Kamil of Jilly, Fatu-al-Ghayib of Abdul Qadir Jeelani and Tohfa Mursala by Mubarak Makhzoomi were of immense help to formulate conceptual background of the tradition.

Vedant and Sufism encompass a broad range of ideology and beliefs by virtue of having branched out in many orders and suborders. Every other order is linked to extraordinary experiences and states of mind which render application of a single theoretical model impossible. An attempt is made to use a contextual approach converging it with sociological functionalism. The former has a potential to take

historical-cultural contexts in consideration and the latter is a proved approach for consequences. The multiplicity of orders is a barrier to define the abstract concepts because same concepts most often convey multiple meanings. Another methodological problem arises because of tradition's generic nature, resulting in clubbing of separate practice and beliefs into one concept which otherwise have grown into separate socio-cultural environs. As a continuous process (especially for Vedant) through the generations, nay ages, their meanings have undergone changes. In addition their applications are as varied as the cultures these have sprouted from.

The Christian overtures employed in transliteration and translation of archaic texts not only by western scholars but nonwestern scholars as well, pose another methodological problem. There is a dearth of similar terms in Hinduism and Islam. Secondly the state of consciousness experienced by an Advaitini or a Sufi are distinct when compared to the sensory experiences of the majority. Such experiences although fundamental to a mystic, but often contradict with ecclesiastic or theological interpretations. A typical example is of the concepts like presence of God, unity of God, consciousness of God and union with God. In most of the studies such concepts have been used interchangeably resulting in constant tension between an order and the theological interpretations.

There is a consensus that Vedant and Sufism are mystic traditions of Hinduism and Islam, closer to the meanings of 'Musterion' or 'Mysterion' of New Testament. It literally means anything hidden . In other biblical versions it is applied to the hidden will of God or hidden sense of things , secrets behind sayings. If Advaitini finds secret meanings in Vedas, Sufi too is engrossed in the riddles of Quranic verse. This is the fundamental but not the last plank where both traditions stand together. The main objective of the paper is to present a synoptic view of these rich traditions to infer more questions than answers. It tries to situate the twin doctrines of Vedant and Sufism as a contested subject which despite a campaign of malice are being practiced and continue to admit new adherents.

The paper does not claim to be technically a comparative study which demands a specific comparative methodology characterized by the accommodation of the religious facts, determination of their real agreements and differences in addition to their demonstrable interdependence. Besides both traditions Vedanta of Hindus and Sufism

of Islam are taken as a general human phenomenon in an attempt to discuss a few commonalities, general patterns and their associations with their cultural and ecological features. Secondly both traditions are seen as a part of larger cultural or a social system. The paper subscribes to the view point that there is a marked difference between a universalizing and ethnic religious tradition. Sufism falls in the former and Vedanta in particular and Hinduism in general falls in the category of ethnic religion like Judaism or Shinto. By ethnic shall we mean that it belongs to a specific people or a group of people[2]. Both the traditions again fall in the category of extraordinary religion.[3] i.e Their everyday culture and concerns, growing at the borders of life and seek to cross over to contact God. In a crude sense both Vedanta and Sufism are more cults, fringe religion in the sense that the cults arise to meet demands not being satisfied by the existing exoteric forms held by the majority.[4] The objective of the present paper is to understand human behavior in mono cultural context without underrating diversity.

Both are one way or the other mystical; the experiences of which are ineffable and indispensible by virtue of the involvement of numinous to attain an unexpected knowledge and understanding of universe through a changed self.

Sufism and Vedanta before establishing themselves as metaphysical doctrine are mystical dimensions of two great traditions: Islam and Hinduism; impacted by their historical and geographical and cultural settings. Mysticism on the other hand is taken as a religious belief based on union with a deity or divine being which lets a seeker transcend the physical experience divine enlightenment. Both Hinduism and Islam have their forms of mysticism; placing an emphasis on spiritual dimension and mysteries of scripture over dogma and rigid legal derivatives. The paper further subscribes to the view point that mysticism of all religious address the fundamental quest of human mind to seek the ultimate truth. The commonalities in the quest is the common heritage of human civilization. Secondly the development and growth of Vedanta and Sufism along with their divergent schools of thoughts, variation in their modes of thought and virtue, upholds the argument that religion and its scripture too is subject to change by the way of interpretations of the original scripture to find a new meaning. It is one

2 Anne Sofie Granslund; Vikings: The Norse Atlantic Sag.
3 Catherine Albanese, America: Religion and Religions.
4 Phillip Jenkins: Dream Catchers: How Mainstream America Discovered Native Spirituality. Oxford University Press 2005

of the reasons that such mystical trends emerge when the customary and traditional practice seem spiritually stifling.

As mysticism is not bound by a specific religion is more prone to syneretism and by its very nature turns radical towards strict dogma and rituals in vogue. Sir William Jhones (1807) while reflecting upon Sufism states that they were free thinkers and that they had much more in common with Greek Philosophy and mystical Speculations of Indian Vedanta.[5] For an observer the mystical doctrines of vedant and Sufism looked same in substance of their meaning and differed only in expression.[6]

Sources

The sources upon which Sufism and Vedanta draw are sacred scripture as both are mystical paths of literate tradition. For advaita Vedanta the sources to legetamise their metaphysical inferences in Vedas. Upanishads Brahma Sutra. A group of sacred hymns composed in aarchaic Sanskrit probably during 1500-1200 B.C.[7] The entire focus of Vedic literature is considered to be the product of device revelation. These were handed down orally for generations in the form of memorized texts through Snavana and Surti Parampara before being committed to writing. Without the twin foundation of Vedas, Quran and Hadiths (saying of prophet, the vast beautiful structure of Hindu and Islamic mysticism could neither have been erected nor preserved).[8] Vedant literally means end of Vedas. Veda and Vedanta. It is by text and explanations considered to be the concluding part of Vedas. Out of the accumulated treasures of Vedas the Upanishads

1. ChandogayPanishad
2. Bradara Nayaka Upanishad
3. Mundokoya Panishad
4. Taittniyo Panishad
5. Katho Panishad
6. Praso Panishad
7. Maitri Upanishad
8. Mubti Upanishad are the fountain head of vedant a philosophical

5 "The sixth Discourse on the Persians" in Works, (London,1807) 3. PP.130-132.

6 Sir William Jones, "On the mystical poetry of Persians and Hindus",WORKS.4. PP.220-221.

7 Britanica Ready Reference Encyclopedia BritanicaIne vol.10,2005. P.88.

8 Arthur. J.Arbury, Introduction to the History of Sufism, Longman Group, London, 1942,P.2. See also Abdullah Suharwardi, Traditions of the Prophet.

school embodying the crux of vedic thought rightly held that Vedanta is the fruit of vedic seed which are garnered in the Upanishads or Vedanta exists in the Vedas like oil exists in the Tila corn. (Tilesu-Tailamiva Vede-Vedantah Supratisthitah). The Upanishads of many parts being in aphoristic style and difficult to understand Badrayana culled out Brahmasutra also known as Vedanta Sutra, Sririka Sutra, Bikshu Sutra, Uttarmimamsa Sutra which contains essence of Vedanta.

With Upanishads, The Brahmans and Aryakas, complete the three tier commentaries of Vedas which otherwise contain hymns or Samithas.[9] As far its oral tradition or Shruti Parampara, shruti denotes, "What is heard" and smirti means " What is remembered".

Aphoristic and metaphorical style of vedic texts on one hand and the time gaps for commentaries and exegetical works on the other, result in the varied interpretations, often contradictory. The exercise developed into different schools of thought (Darshan) in Indian philosophy. Upanishads turned into an Umbrella term for many sub traditions and doctrines ranging from dualism to non-dualism. However, all the schools built upon "Prasthantrayi" principle where there is a consensus that the Vedas are the revealed verse and the ultimate source of knowledge. Prasthantrayi is a collective term for principle Upanishads, the Brahama Sutra and Bhagwat Gita. Out of well established six schools (Dasshans, Astika) Advaita Vedanta presents striking similarity in doctrine, metaphysics and practices with Islamic mysticism tradition Sufism. Other schools are Dvaita, Daitadvaita, Shudhadvaita, Nyaya, Sambhya, Yoga.

The similarity in thought process has strengthened critique with regard to Sufism that the latter was influenced significantly by the former. Western and orthodox muslim scholarship is replete with this mindset and vedant connection to Sufism is the important component of their tirade against Sufism as un Islamic. Infact before constructing analogies, it is imperative that there must be something similar in the state of knowledge and of society where the same causes produce the same effects. The term Advaita first occurs in vedanti.e context of Mundubya Upanishad**.**[10] others consider the term from Vedic era and the sage Vayanavalkya (8-7th CE) told to have coined it in connection to the verse of Bhidranyaka Upanishad. Its central philosophy that what

9 Klostemaine Klaus, K., a Survey of Hinduism, State University of New York Press 2007, P.46.

10 Richard King 1995.P.268,

created all existence is also present in all; reflected in all beings and inert matter and that (Brahman) is both efficient and instrumental cause of the creation, that creative principle was and is everywhere, always.[11] Apparently Wahdatul Wajood term appears to be the carbon copy of this philosophical derivative. The source of Sufism is Quran and Hadith (theaying of the prophet). Quran by all believers is regarded as sacred scripture of islam considered as infallible word of god revealed to His messenger Mohammad. The text first compiled in its authorative form in the 7th century consisting of 114 Suras composed of Ayats of varying length in Arabic. By virtue of being sacred it is regarded as immutable in both form and content. Traditionally its translations were forbidden and even today translations and commentaries are termed as paraphrases, in vogue to facilitate understanding. Besides there are dozens of exegetical works of the Quran and collections of sayings of the prophet which are equally revered and referred by the Sufis and non sufis alike. The interpretative aspect of the scripture turns into a fault line between sufi masters and orthodox established schools. The historical obscure controversial development of Sufism too was a factor to draw a wedge between exoteric and ecsotatic dimensions of Islam. The former emphasizing outward observance of scripture and ritual and latter for deep insight into scripture and essence of ritual. The growth and development of Sufism has been summoned by Ibn Khaldun as Sufism belongs to the sciences of the religious law that originated in Islam. It is based on the assumption that the practices its adherents had always been considered by the important early Muslims, the men around Mohammad and the men of second generation, as well as those who cave after them, as the path of truth and right guidance. The Sufi approach is based upon constant application to divine worship, complete devotion to god, aversion to false splendor of the world, abstinence from the pleasure, retirement from the world to solitude for divine worship. These things were general among men around Mohammed and the early muslims. The special name was given to those who aspired to divine worship.[12] Ever since not a single Sufi master (and there is a long list) be it early ones or the late comers, has challenged the authenticity of Quran or Hadith as guiding principles. Revelation however is taken by a sufi; a

11 Frits Staal, Discovering the Vedas, Origins, Mantaras, Rituals, Insights, Penguin Books,2008, P.365.alsoMayeda ,1999, PP.18-20

12 Ibn Khaldun; The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History trans. Franz Rosenthal, ed. N. J. Dawood, Bollingen Series, Princeton University Press, 1969. PP.358,359-367.

locus of divine-human encounter. An emphasis on religious credentials has always been on a prerogative to its masters and adherents and works of sufis like Saraj. Sulami Kalabadhi, Suharwandi and others took pains to link sufi doctrine to Quran and the prophet to demonstrate their close relation to revelation and its messenger.[13] Sufis practice ritual and their rites the same way and in the same direction, but for them this outward symbolic concentration serves as a support for inward concentration. Those making all ritualistic movements during prayers however, are symbolic representation of revelation which says that remembrance of god is greater than ritual. QXXIX:45, firmly believing that the inward turning towards centre is greater than turning towards outer centre.[14] Same applies to almost all verses of Quran and the sayings. That Sufism simultaneously excludes atheism and agnostism but also exoterism for being exonable and which claims to be self sufficient with its narrow vision while taking a aphorism of Quran and other verses in their literal sense. The casual Exoteric interpretations have turned sacred into the domain of profanity by virtue of tendency to take revelations at their face value. Although Sufism does not exclude outward as such as outward too is one of divine names.

He is the first
and the last
The evident
And the hidden
And He has full knowledge
Of all things.
(Q. LVII. 3)

As the outward is one with the inward, the outward for Sufi becomes symbolic but the essence lies in the inward centre. The Quran is the book of the whole community yet ironically it has turned into the book of minority.[15] The spiritual elect only adhere to its message in essence. In its practical applications also it is Sufi who turns into the real straight path seeker, invoked in most often repeated customary five time prayers. Quran.1:6.

Show us the straight path.

The exoteric interpretation for straight path regulated by Sharia

13 Carl.W.Earnest, Sufism; An Introduction to the Mystical Tradition of Islam.
14 Martin Lings, what is Sufism. Reprint Kitab Mahal Srinagar 2016.p.31.
15 Quran Majeed LVII. 30.

(legal code drawn from the quran). While as Sufi Interprets it is a path leading to Him and His Divnity. Emphasis on essence of revelation and hadith separates sufisecsoterism from exoterism, widening meanwhile a gap of the doctrinal and metaphysical derivatives. However, this emphasis establishes a special affinity between sufi and the revelation. Sufi's decision to seek the right path pushes him to eternal instead of ephemeral. His practices turn his belief into action and which is not only mental but painstakingly vigorous which ultimately leads to Him. Adherence to their essence instead of outward literal places sufi at the citadel of foremost who by virtue of his practices presses eagerly forward on the straight path as compared to majority.

Unto all (in faith)
Hath Allah promised good
But those who strived and fight
Hath he distinguished
Above those who sit at home
By a great reward.
(Q. VI. 95)

Same is revealed and interpreted in verses LVI.8.40, LXXVI.5-6, LXXXIII:8-28. Taking Quran as Al-furqan meaning criterion of values and discernment, laying foundations for a hierarchy in virtues. Difference on the emphasis of certain attributes of Allah appears to be the second most important factor for the wedge between customary Islam and Sufism. The orthodox scholarship reduces God-Man relationship to a Sovereign-Subject Relationship to the utter disregard to the other attributes of Allah. Although Allah Almighty is undoubtedly the sovereign and supreme authority of the universe, but the relationship is much wider, deeper and fuller and there is an ethereal quality about it.[16] Before obeying His commands as revealed in Quran, he must know Him in essence through his attributes and sacred names also revealed in the Book. Through his understanding He is his Friend (Habib), guardian, protector, sustainer and preserver besides supreme authority. The relationship is to be felt and experienced and this is not physical but falls in the domain of spirituality, to attain proximity to Him and become entirely His. The mere interpretation not akin to established explanation does not amount to heresy and apostasy which

16 Syed Ahrar Hussain "Translations Note" in abdul Hasan ali Nadvi, Appreciation and Interpretation of Religion in the Modern Age, Academy of Islamic research and publications, Delhi,1982.PP.1-8.

unfortunately it did. It should have been taken as enrichment instead of aberations. Infact if Quran is taken as a word (last word) of God, it would be periodically interpreted and newer explanations would come forth till dooms day. Secondly exoterist interpretations take their conclusions as fixed points, which otherwise is itself subject to changes by way of new explanations and even changes in the meanings of the words of scripture. The exoterist narrative closes the doors of discourse on one hand and down grade the spiritual or mystical dimension of life, the very foundation of all religions including Islam.

Arguments and counter arguments which resulted in the exegetics of Vedas, flourished in different schools of though but in case of muslims, it turned into aberations. When an advaitini reaches mokhsa (liberation) and his self merges with Brahman (supreme self) he declares:

AhmBrahmansmi
I am Brahman
Or
Tat tvasmasi
That Thou Art
Or
AyatamaBrahaman
This atman is Brahman
Or
Praganananenu Brahmana
Prajajanum is Brahmana.

But sufihistory is replete with trials of apostasy. Hallaj pays for uttering:

Anal Huq
I am God.

So paid the noble souls of Suharwardi, Sarmad, Darashikoh and others. The intellects of all time Imam Gazali, Ibn Arabi, Shams Tabrez were spared , but faced literal tirade. An array of Sufi poets not only Persian but Syrian, Arabs, Spaniads and many more if not executed in person but were repeatedly murdered in anti sufi tirades on pulpits. The discourses with regard to verse and hadith by Abdul Qadir Jedani, Ibn Farid, Ibn Farabi and the like are superb commentaries. Hujwiri, depicting their faith in Quran and sayings of the prophet on one hand and giving a rebuttal to the argument that muslim community had lost creative potential and nothing but darkness and apostasy prevails in muslim history. Sufis emerge as torch bearers of Islamic spirit and

growth. As the prophet's sayings has always been an inspiration to strength his resolve to tread the path of righteous.

1. Some people of my community will always be supreme and their success and dominance will continue till dooms day.1

Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Munaqi

2. A group in my community will always be successful and those who will not support them, can put them to no loss….till the end of the world.

Jam-e-Jirmidhi, Kitab Al-Fitan

3. A group in my community will always be successful and victorious in the matter of truth till the end of the world.

Hakim, Mustadarak

With regard to unresolved exoteric/esoteric dilemma Martin Lings symbolically states:

Considering revelation (Quran) a flowing tidal wave from the ocean of eternal infinitude to the shores of our finite world. Sufis endeavor is to plunge into the ebb of one of these waves and to be drawn back with it to its eternal and finite source. The outhoxy are exclusively concerned with the water, which the waves deposit in recepticles-which constitutes the formal aspect of religion. By comparison sufi is interested in ebbing wave.

Sharing all those rites with the Orthodoxy although performed esoterically but with the firm belief that the waters left in the recepticles by the tidal wave is the same water that ebbs. This way his outward symbolic concentration serves as a support for inward concentration![17]

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